the method of narration and by the method of exposition In this volume and in the succeeding volumes I have tried to do the same work by the method of exegesis and interpretation I desire also to publish my translation of the Gita separately and to bring out a very brief volume of notes in which the re integration of doctrine can be shown in a compendious form which will strike the eye and appeal to the heart of even the busy casual educated reader of to day I offer my work to Sri Krishna as a *Jnana Yajna* because in the eighteenth chapter of the Gita He has stated that He is pleased with such a sacrificial mentality The Gita begins with the word *Dharma* and ck [illegible] the words *Sri*, *Vijaya*, *Bhuti*, and *Niti* Its study and the strenuous application of its teachings to life are the only and supreme God given means towards the achievement of sure and splendid national prosperity and victory and ascendency and righteousness If this volume helps my brethren in the direction of transforming distracted and despairing India into a united and triumphant India, I shall deem such a result as the greatest reward and the greatest blessing

TANJORE
4th November 1927 } *K. S Ramaswami Sastri*

THE BHAGAVAD GITA.

INTRODUCTION



HE *Bhagavad Gita* has long been recognised and loved and worshipped as one of the greatest scriptures of the World. My attempt in the succeeding pages will be to enter into the spirit of the Lord's teaching with the help of the great Acharyas but without surrendering my individuality and independence of judgment. The peculiar features of my effort will be to show the harmony among the paths of Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana and to state the elements of harmony among the three great schools of thought that have sought to interpret the Gita, to prove how many of the alleged differences among them are unreal, to state what are the irreducible elements of difference among them and to show at the same time in what comprehensive scheme of thought even such

differences fall into their proper places and by what method we can attain to a full and unitive vision of the highest Hindu thought as embodied in the golden declarations by Incarnate Godhead in the Gita The three schools of thought are like the eyes and the mind—which form a trinity that must work together to have a full vision of things I know that the task that I set before myself is both difficult and liable to misconstruction at the hands of devoted followers of each of the three schools But the attempt to get at the truth of things is the privilege and duty of man and I shall make it with a due sense of the greatness of the leaders of thought who have expounded the Gita till now and of my own personal limitations

Dharma is Eternal To modern ears this seems an outrageous statement But let us examine the time myth for a moment The division of time into ages centuries decades, years months weeks days hours minutes and seconds is merely a creation of the mind just as we draw imaginary longitudes and latitudes over the surface of the globe for purposes of easy communication of ideas about the locations of things The stream of time is eternal, it is beginningless and endless Dharma is the eternal system of laws governing

the Universe. There is no inherent illogicality in saying that it is eternal. It is like the enveloping atmosphere in the bosom of which the flux of things goes on. At the moment of the manifestation of the world it also becomes manifest, like the fundamental existence of space which is necessary for the rhythmic dances of the stars and suns. It is in right relations to all ages or rather to each age as we imagine it to arrive.

The soul of man is eternal and hence the laws governing the activities of the embodied soul must be eternal also. The fact that in particular human groups there was not sufficient general purity and individual illumination to attain to a vision of such laws through Divine grace does not disprove the existence of such laws or the possibility of the revelation of such laws duly given and duly transmitted in specific human groups and through the agency of specially inspired men.

If the soul of man is not different from the body, the senses, and the mind, it will be nothing astonishing to say that the laws governing it must be in a state of flux just as the body, the senses, and the mind constituting the universe of phenomena are in a state of ceaseless flux and change. But if the soul is separate from them and is eternal

happiness and bliss in its essence, it is clear that the laws in regard to it must also partake of the same eternal character Hence such acts and omissions as affect the embodied soul's future must be governed by eternal laws and cannot be subject to mutations of time and place or the variations of human desires which belong to the region of the mind.

Hence it is that Dharma is said to be *Ateendriya* i e. not verifiable by the senses. It is akin to the soul and to God in this respect. It is like them also in that it is intensely realisable Dharma is the bridge leading to immortality. अमृतस्यैव सेतुः। It is the auspicious means of realising God-union. If the soul and God are not verifiable by the senses, it does not seem unreasonable to say that the means of passage from soul to God should be unverifiable by the senses or by the worldly and impure mind Tread the path itself and the identity of the sign-posts can be easily recognised.

Indeed Dharma is like the surrounding sheath of air which is as necessary as the pervasive warmth of the central sun of God for life. While जगत् is derived from a root meaning "to go" and hence implies a ceaseless continuum of change, we

must remember that धर्म is derived from a root meaning to sustain"

While the West cries Follow Reason" India says 'Follow Dharma and accept Reason when it is in harmony with Dharma and in furtherance of Dharma" It is an illusion to suppose that in respect of cultural and spiritual matters progression of time means attainment of a higher altitude of realisation Mr J M Kennedy says 'But even those among us who do not profess to be very ardent students of the classics will be the first to admit that we have not developed in a cultural or philosophical sense beyond where the ancient Greeks left off We have it is true made great strides in purley material things but in spiritual affairs we are little wiser than Plato Heracleitus and Pythagoras Indeed if the Western intellect is not shocked by the view that the ethical code proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount is not outworn there is no inherent unacceptablity in our notions about Dharma

In fact the Hindu conception of Dharma is not really out of harmony with the essential elements of the modern spirit The modern spirit is summed up in the words—Liberty Equality and

Fraternity As regards Liberty, the greatest of Hindu books on Dharma says—

सर्वं परवश दु खं सर्वमात्मवश सुखम्—*Manu*

(All dependence on others is misery, all self-dependence bliss.

In this country Dharma ruled the Kings who ruled the people, bad kings were turned out when they were bent on destroying Dharma, the people were consulted when the heir apparent was chosen and at other important moments of the national life, there was the combination of a strong central authority and local self-government and village autonomy, there was no mere verbal worship of democracy as a fetish in combination with the pulling of the political strings by abusive and self-seeking cliques such as we find in the West, but a stable social and political order based on an admirable combination of the elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy all under the sovereignty of Dharma, there was no clash of majority and minority or of minorities *inter se*, but there was an organisation of society on a basis of co ordinated and non-competitive social service based on a spiritual conception of life which placed duties before rights, and there was the utmost intellectual freedom Mr Havell says in his Ancient and

Mediæval Architecture of India 'It is true that Indo Aryan liberty was not of the crude Western type represented by the formula 'Libertie Egalitie, Fraternitie' It was liberty for every man, whether king or peasant to follow his own Dharma—the Dharma being that which long tradition and the wisest of Aryan law givers who knew Indian history and people had taught every man to regard as his duty to God, to state his household, and himself" He says again 'The Aryan was a born aristocrat but his ideal of Government was essentially democratic .. The philosophy of the Vedas proclaimed the highest ideal of *self government* and Aryan philosophy was not an abstract speculative theory but a practical formula of life The democratic principle of government was fully understood in ancient India' The combination of aristocratic ideals in personal relations with democratic ideals in governmental and spiritual relations produced a unique, efficient and harmonious social polity in the golden age of Indian civilisation

So far as *equality* is concerned our civilisation has recognised the inherent and spiritual equality of all to the fullest extent nay, it proclaims the *unity of life* But there is a difference between

shutting our eyes to the patent inequalities of mental and physical life and indulging in day dreams of equality of mental and physical life or bringing about such equality at the base of the guillotines established to murder those who happen to have got the good things and graces of life in a more abundant measure—and recognising such inequalities and trying to effect equality by filling up the gaps and breaches with the ambrosia of love and of the recognition of divine immanence and manifestation The latter is our method and the former is the Western method

So far as *fraternity* is concerned we have recognised this principle fully as following from the fatherhood and motherhood of God But we have realised what the West has forgotten it , that the conception of fraternity implies elder and younger brothers and that the reverences of life should be maintained for the uplift of all Truth was held to be accessible to all and all were equally eligible for salvation and no real difference was made between man and man Mr Havell very rightly speaks of the spirit of Aryan philosophy which proclaimed truth to be a temple open on all sides to devout worshippers who might choose the approach most accessible to them '

Thus in the West society is sought to be made stable, or rather kept on the brink of unstable equilibrium by checks and counter checks, here it is held together by the central gravitational force of Dharma There law and fear of the enemy perform the functions of love of God and love of Dharma which are operative in India There society consists of conflicting groups held together by fear of enemies and by obedience to law, here we have interrelated groups held together by love of God and loyalty to Dharma There religion is not in vital union with life, but here in the words of Mr Havell "religion is never regarded as external to secular life but as its consecration and illumination"

In our land religion, philosophy, and ethics are commingled are one This is as it ought to be as human nature is a unity and not a mere juxtaposition of unrelated elements The assertion that such commingling is a mark of barbarism and that their separation is a test of civilisation is baseless The thinker is yet to be born who is bold enough to deny refinement and civilisation to the Indian people

The Hindu conception of the state is of a stable and harmonised social order—able to resist disruptive forces within and attacks from without

—which has as its instrument of political life a harmonious combination of monarchy aristocracy and democracy as represented by the king the council of the elders and the council of the people The will of the people was always consulted and respected and any dangerous predominance of any one of the elements of political power was prevented by their *common allegiance to the sovereignty* of Dharma In modern times the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people has been raised to the rank of a fetish Democracy run mad is a de vitalising and dangerous force in societies There are provinces of life where the will of the people is everything and there are other provinces of life where the will of kings of aristocracies and of democarcies must bow before a Higher will which declares to us the eternal principles of righteousness Where the will of the people—nay even the will of the majority which is a less stable and unworthy manifestation of human reason—is allowed to subvert the racial ideals of the people and the moral order as revealed to it then it becomes a foe to real progress and culture and is one of the arch enemies of God

I have thus dwelt at length on the Hindu conception of *Dharma* as that is the basic truth on

which rest the golden doctrines of the *Gita* about the attainment of beatitude We have to rise from the unregulated activity of *Kama* or desire which in conjunction with intellect leads us to depths far below the level of the brutes From *Kama* to *Dharma viruddha Kama*, (desire unopposed to Dharma) from the latter to *Aniskama* (desireless) *Karma* from the latter to *Dhyana* and *Jnana*, and from them to *Moksha*—such is the golden ladder of the spiritual life

For the attainment of this *Sraddha* (faith) is necessary *Sraddha* is the माता (mother) who will show to us our Divine Father Who but the mother can show us our father

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ (*Gita IV 41*)

This divine virtue of *Sraddha* will eventually lead to the attainment of *abhyasa* and *vairagya* and eventually to the raptures of God love and God knowledge and to the final attainment of union with God

स्वाध्याययोगसंपत्त्या परमात्मा प्रकाशते ।

(By the acquisition of scriptural knowledge and Yoga the Supreme Soul becomes radiant in our souls)

I shall now deal with a few questions raised at the outset by many inquiring modern minds The first of these is whether Sri Krishna is God In regard to this matter we must at the beginning proceed on faith and await the bliss of realising His divinity as a fact of consciousness Concurrent and uniform testimony of holy people for ages vouched for the truth of the fact that concentration of mind and purity of heart can help us to achieve the vision of Godhead If we can accept such testimony in mundane matters—we are doing that every day—we may without violation of our logical faculty do the same in spiritual matters The declarations of the Gita and of holy sages when taken on trust and acted up to with sincerity and devotion will become self evident and blissful facts of consciousness When the mind is made calm and serene by purity and dispassion and devotion the glory of God will shine there as the full moon shines reflected on the bright surface of a tranquil lake The divinity of Sri Krishna is a truth and has been proclaimed even in the Upanishads The Gopala Purva Tapani Upanishad describes Him thus

सत्पुण्डरीकनयन मेघाभ वैद्युताम्बरम् ।
द्विभुज ज्ञानमुद्राढ्य वनमालिनमीश्वरम् ॥

(The Isvara whose eyes are like the beautiful lotus who is of the hue of the cloud, whose dress is like the lightning, who has two arms and who shines with the symbol of wisdom and who bears the garland of flowers known as Vanamala).

The Lord's divinity is supported by the clearest and most credible and unequivocal testimony, by the words of the holy and perfected men of all ages, of those who had not the two defects of incompleteness of knowledge and absence of disinterestedness. The inner realisation of the divinity of the Lord will come after we become worthy of it by service and love and wisdom. बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते says the Lord in the Gita,—(VI, 19).

The next question raised is, whether the words of the *Gita* are Sri Krishna's own words or not? There is nothing inherently absurd in the veiw that Sri Krishna actually spoke the words of the *Gita* on the battlefield. Even in the case of human beings utterance becomes rhythmical under the stress of emotion The metre of the Gita is so simple that until very recently there were scholars who could discourse in it offhand on the most abstruse subjects. Is it wonderful that the Lord discoursed in the *anushtup* metre to Arjuna on the problems of life and death and the means to the

attainment of immortality? There is however an orthodox school of interpreters that thinks that Vyasa has given the discourse of the Lord in words as near the Lord's words as possible, preserving most faithfully the spirit of the Lord's teachings. Vyasa was according to us an incarnation of the Lord. व्यासाय विष्णुरूपाय says a well-known verse. The Lord says in Chapter X of the Gita: मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः Hence even in this view there is no limitation set on the value of the *Gita*.

Again, some people say that the path to salvation as stated in the *Gita* is easy and others say that it is difficult. The path described in the *Gita* should be trod with the utmost care, discrimination, and loyalty. In fact, it is simply trying to set the current back and carry the stream to its source. It requires immense energy and concentration of will to stem the river of desire and to undo all that we have done in the past. The easiness of the path lies in the possibility of our having access to the central fountain of power and wisdom, in our identification of ourselves with the Lord, or rather in our complete surrender of our too aggressive limited self unto Him in a passion of love.

Some ask, is the ethical system of the Gita practical? Arjuna felt it to be so in the face of one

of the most trying situations in life and said

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

(*Gita, XVIII, 73*)

What better proof can there be to show that the ethical system of the Gita is eminently practical and is not a mere matter of speculation unrelated to life.

Some others ask, does the *Gita* point as the goal *Karma yoga*, *Bhakti yoga* or *Jnana yoga?* A great deal of bewildering and acrimonious controversy has grown about this discussion Let us take the three verses :

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥
तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ।
न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ॥

(*Gita V, 2, VI, 46, V, 38*)

Each seems to praise one of the paths as the highest But the Lord's synthesis is to be gathered from a few verses to which sufficient prominence has not been given and which give us a clue to His real teaching which can be best summed up by saying that the golden ladder of the higher life is to rise

from unregulated desire to a state of regulated desire thence to a state of action in a spirit of detachment and renunciation of fruits to the Lord, thence to limitless devotion and meditation in which the mind is laid at His lotus feet in a passion of limitless and ceaseless adoration and becomes full of illumination as to the truth of things and attains to cosmic consciousness and thence to the eternal rapture of God realisation I am giving the verses in a sequence of my own to bring out my meaning fully and forcibly \

यत्साङ्ख्यै प्राप्यते स्थान तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।
कर्मणैव ससिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादय ॥

सन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दु खमाप्तुमयोगत ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

य त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्त पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्य च कूटस्थमचल ध्रुवम् ॥

सनियम्येन्द्रियग्राम सर्वत्र समबुद्धय ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रता ॥

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दु खं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥

(*Gita* *V*, *5*, *6*, *XII*, *3*, *4*, *5*)

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सन्यस्य मत्परा ।
अनन्येनैव हि योगेन मा ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि न चिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥ (XII, 6, 7)

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ (X 9—11)

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥
बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते । (VII, 18, 19)

I shall develop these ideas later on but what I wish to emphasise here is that the Gita gives us a synthetic vision of life in which these means of uplift wait us at fixed stages and lead us eventually to the attainment of the bliss of Moksha I shall refer here to two stanzas in the Bhagavata that bear on this point

अतः पुंभिर्द्विजश्रेष्ठा वर्णाश्रमविभागशः ।
स्वनुष्ठितस्य धर्मस्य संसिद्धिर्हरितोषणम् ॥

वासुदेवे भगवति भक्तियोगः प्रयोजितः ।
जनयत्याशु वैराग्यं ज्ञानं च यदहैतुकम् ॥

(The fructification of well performed Dharma as prescribed according to Varnas and asramas is propitiation of Hari Bhakti Yoga in relation to Bhagavan Vasudeva causes soon the self birth of dispassion and wisdom)

The real fact is that there are some persons who while pursuing the path of karma attain to the bliss of enlightenment *as a result of devotion and knowledge* in past births and in the present birth and yet continue to do action having regard to their station in life Even in their case liberation presupposes love and realisation of God which alone can give salvation तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्—How is this possible without knowing and loving Him ? There are others whose *vasanas* take them from the completed life of action into the life of devotion where the mind is so central in the love of the Lord that the appointed time for doing *karmas* passes often without their being aware of even the passing of time There are yet others whose *vasanas* take them from the completed life of action into the life of meditation and of inquiry as to the verities of life and whose mind is so centred in this task as to be oblivious of the march of time These souls must necessarily be few and are the very salt of the earth If others unfit for such tasks take up such tasks

they merely mislead the world and ruin themselves. The Lord says

> कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
> इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥
>
> (*Gita III, 6*)

I have seen no discussion more futile than this Each of these paths being purity itself and the Lord being the Eternal Pure One, can we not trust it to lead us to Him somehow, directly or indirectly? The only test is, the attainment of God realisation (आत्मदर्शन) Each soul must attain to the state of Infinite Love and Wisdom to attain to such आत्मदर्शन The measure of action which the Lord lays upon it for the sake of लोकसंग्रह (the guidance of the world) is determined by the time and place and environment of the birth and existence of the body What has this accident to do with the bliss of God-realisation which is the common factor of all real liberation? It is the privilege and duty of every one to work up to this Mount Kailasa in the Himalaya of higher life, whatever be the particular path by which he climbs up to that dazzling and dizzy height Every one must realise that only knowledge which exists as enjoyment or bliss the bliss of *Sacchitananda* or the bliss of supreme love—that can give

the truest liberation The bondage of the trammels of matter which enmesh us by reason of innumerable attachments formed in innumerable births must go Such attachments being the result of ignorance the effects will not disappear unless the cause disappears Hence knowledge is the one condition of true and effective and eternal liberation This knowledge is not mere intellectual assent but realisation We can easily see that it can never be really distinct from love If in respect of the higher among the transient phenomena of the world knowledge and love go together they are necessarily one in the case of the highest the noumenon They are like the light and the warmth of the sun —inseparable and one A life of selfless action combined with devotion and meditation is the one means of attaining to this stage There may be some who had gone through this stage in previous births or in a portion of this life time To them as pointed out already the measure of action is determined by their station in life and it is done only for लोकसंग्रह When shall our empty discussions about the superiority of one path or another cease and when shall we resolutely, never halting never resting tread the path that leads unto Him आदित्य वर्णं तमस परस्तात ? (Who shines like the sun beyond the confines of darkness)

Another question asked is, whether the teachings of the Lord in the Gita are suitable to all ages? The nectar of salvation will confer immortality not on men of one age or one land alone but on all Arjuna stood before the Lord as the typical man (नर) and has been the means of enlightenment of the whole universe for all time

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

I may refer here also to a beautiful verse in the *Bhagavata* which says —

एष हि लोकानां शिवः पन्थाः सनातनः ।
यं पूर्वे चानुसंतस्थुर्यत्प्रमाणं जनार्दनः ॥

It is again asked why did the Lord impart his gracious teachings on the battlefield and with restrictions imposed by the difficulties of the time and place chosen for the imparting of the instruction (*Upadesa*)? But all that is required for the imparting of instruction is प्रश्नानुकूल्य, श्रोत्रानुकूल्य, and वक्त्रानुकूल्य (suitableness of opportunity, of the pupil, and of the teacher) This combination was perfect in the present case The propriety of the Lord's choosing the battlefield as the scene of his discourse is obvious The travail of Arjuna's soul made his enlightenment and uplift absolutely neces-

sary Of course Sri Krishna could have by his divine will compelled Arjuna to fight But it would have been an act of cruel kindness to Arjuna The *Bhagavata* describes the compassion and love of a real teacher thus

ब्रूयुः स्निग्धस्य शिष्यस्य गुरवो गुह्यमप्युत ।

Other inquirers ask, why does the Gita begin with metaphysics and not with the problems of conduct directly? The first reason is that Arjuna's special inner difficulty arose by reason of his erroneous notions about the nature of the soul His *Soka* (grief) was due to *Moha* (illusion) about the nature of the soul and about the nature of duty Secondly, to solve a problem of conduct a right idea of duty is necessary Dharma (duty) is not rightly understood with wrong conceptions about the soul about God and about the true aim of life which is the attainment of union with God Therefore the Lord goes to the root of things at the very outset of the discourse The body and the soul are not identical—that is the basic statement on which the fair fabric of God ward leading truths is raised *Moksha* is स्वरूपप्राप्ति (self realisation) The recovery of our true nature alone can give us permanent happiness for, all things acquired must go away The scripture is ज्ञापक and not कारक. It reminds us

of true and divine nature and does not ask us to acquire as salvation something which is outside of ourselves It shows to us the glorious ornament about our neck (कण्ठाभरण) which we did not see and which we regarded as lost and which brings us joy and elation when discovered to be with us. It is the acquitting by the higher court of God realisation, the soul that was held in bondage by the lower court of desire Such release from bondage is not the acquisition of a new element of joy but the attainment of our own bright freedom and joy

The teachings of the Gita are in perfect harmony with the teachings contained in all the other portions of the Mahabharata The view that the Gita is an interpolation in the epic is thus absurd The interpolation theory is always trotted out when a man wants to condemn a thing or to make out a show of scholarship or to undermine the faith of others I may refer here to the closing verses of the *Bharati* which show how there is perfect harmony between the teachings of the Gita and those of Mahabharata generally

मातापितृसहस्राणि पुत्रदारशतानि च ।
ससारेष्वनुभूतानि तथा यास्यन्ति चापरे ॥
हर्षस्थानसहस्राणि भयस्थानशतानि च ।

दिवसे दिवसे मूढमाविशन्ति न पण्डितम् ॥

ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्विरौम्येष न च कश्चिच्छृणोति मे ।
धर्मादर्थश्च कामश्च स किमर्थं न सेव्यते ॥

न जातु कामान्न भयान्न लोभात्
धर्मं त्यजेज्जीवितस्यापि हेतोः ।
नित्यो धर्मः सुखदुःखे त्वनित्ये
जीवो नित्यो हेतुरस्य त्वनित्यः ॥

This wonderful work is absolutely perfect even from the point of view of poetic beauty and merit Its predominant emotion is भक्ति (devotion) and it leads all from the plane of worldliness up the golden ladder of *Nishkama kar na* *Bakti* and *J a a* to Eternal Bliss Its symmetry and loveliness are as remarkable as its purity and holiness It has also been classed with and described as an *Upa shad* a *Sastra* and *Brahmavidya* (भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे) The word Gita' imports only भगवद्गीता though there are innumerable Gitas now existing mostly written with it as their model and giving to us its great teachings in other forms The *Gita* is in perfect harmony with the *srutis* and *smritis* It harmonises all aspects of life shows the concord between theism and monism reveals to us the proper place of *k rma*, *bhakti* and *jn a* con

veys to us the quintessence of all truth, and fits us for the attainment of God-love and God-realisation.

I do not go here into the question of the new *Gita* given to the world by the Shudda Dharma Mandalam, because it has no credentials and is opposed to the testimony of all our teachers and saints and because such a discussion will unduly swell the size of this introduction. Nor do I propose to go into the question of the date of the Gita, because there is no use in discussing all the contradictory dates now assigned and such an attempt is sure to make this introduction longer than it should be No valid reasons have been shown to reject the traditional date and we should hence accept it as correct. I have dealt with these questions in another volume.

Sri Sankaracharya prefaces his holy *bhashya* to the Gita by saying that the Lord had taught the *Pravritti marga* and the *Nivritti marga* and that as the Dharma consisting of these two paths became less potent and widespread owing to the energy of *adharma* consequent on lessening discrimination and unselfishness which themselves were caused by selfishness and desire, the Lord incarnated as Sri-Krishna to establish Dharma and preserve the brahminhood of the Brahmins, because if these were taught to tread the right path they would see

to the Dharma being observed by others This incarnation of the Lord was due to His infinite Love and Compassion He taught the two aspects of Dharma to Arjuna to enable him to reach the shore beyond the sea of grief and illusion and chose Arjuna as the recipient of his gracious doctrine and message because what a great man learns and does in the world will be followed by all Sri Sankara says further that the holy goal of the Gita is the highest bliss which is consequent on outsoaring the cycle of *samsara* and which is attained by *nishkama karma bhakti and jnana* अभ्युदयार्थोऽपि य प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो धर्मो वर्णाश्रमांश्चोद्दिश्य विहित स देवादिस्थानप्राप्तिहेतुरपि सन्नीश्वरार्पणबुद्ध्याऽनुष्ठीयमान सत्त्वशुद्धये भवति फलाभिसन्धिवर्जित । शुद्धसत्त्वस्य च ज्ञाननिष्ठायोग्यताप्राप्तिद्वारेण ज्ञानोत्पत्तिहेतुत्वेन च निःश्रेयसहेतुत्वमपि प्रतिपद्यते ।

Sri Ramanuja prefaces his holy *bhashya* by saying that the Supreme Lord who is beyond all worlds and thoughts incarnates in the various worlds to enable the souls to look up to His lotus feet and attain the fruit of life and incarnated as Sri Krishna to show His Infinite beauty and grace to the world of men the ostensible object being to remove the sorrows of the earth (भूभार) and taught for showing to all the means of true salvation by Bhaktiyoga with jnana and karma as angas under

the guise of inducing Arjuna to do his duty पाण्डुतनययुद्धप्रोत्साहनव्याजेन परमपुरुषार्थलक्षणमोक्षसाधनतया वेदान्तोदितस्वविषयं ज्ञानकर्मानुगृहीतं भक्तियोगमवतारयामास ।

Sri Madhvacharya prefaces his holy bhashya by saying that Vyasa, an incarnation of the Lord, composed the Bharata to convey the Vedic truths to all and that the Gita is the essence of the Bharata तत्र च सर्वभारतार्थसंग्रहा वासुदेवार्जुनसंवादाख्या भारतपारिजातमधुभूता गीतानुपनिबबन्ध ।

I do not think that it is necessary to deal *in extenso* with the ideas of others as these are only amplifications of the above views We can well realise how all of the above views are noble and true and enable us to have a free access into the heaven of Sri Krishna's gracious message

Nilakanta says well —

भारते सर्ववेदार्थो भारतार्थश्च कृत्स्नश. ।
गीतायामस्ति तेनेयं सर्वशास्त्रमयी मता ॥

It is usual in our books to state in regard to each work the subject-matter, the inter-relatedness of means and end, the fit aspirant, and the goal (विषय, सम्बन्ध, अधिकारि and फल). The nature of the eternal verities of life is the subject-matter of this eternal and eternally-glorious work The

inter relation of means and end in it is the clear exposition of the *Sadhanas* (means) that lead to God love God attainment God realisation and God union The fit aspirant is he who like Arjuna is face to face with the clear and clarion call of Duty in the battlefields of life and who throws himself at the feet of the Lord for enlightenment and uplift The goal of the work is *Moksha* or the attainment of the perfect and eternal liberation We must hence approach the study of this holy work with a due sense of the greatness of the theme the means and the goal

Thus we can well sum up the introduction thus At the beginning of each Kalpa energies of the universe which had been withdrawn into Him begin to have self expression They unfold themselves according to an infinite plan present to the mind of the Lord Just as at the commencement of the evolution of the energies by the will of the Lord begins the universal cycle (*Kalpa*) so also has the Lord s message of salvation to human souls been given for their guidance at the beginning of the cycle itself This is the real significance of the Hindu theory of the origin and meaning of the scriptures Such message of purification and salvation is the Veda The Veda

teaches the *Pravritti Marga* and the *Nivritti Marga* The former if followed properly and in a spirit of dispassion and detachment and devotion will lead to the latter and through it to God The Gita teaches us this truth again and again, and modern commentators who do not recognise this and make action the final goal of life are people who have no real vision as to the real teachings of the Gita They think that Sri Sankara has suppressed action altogether This view of theirs is due to a pheno menal error A beautiful Sanskrit verse says

न कर्माणि त्यजेद्योगी कर्मभिस्त्यज्यते ह्यसौ ।

Sri Sankaracharya says

अलङ्कारो ह्ययमस्माकं यद्ब्रह्मात्मावगतौ सत्यां सर्वकर्तव्यताहानिः कृतकृत्यता च ।

Hence according to him it is only he that has attained the beatitude of God-realisation that is free from the life of action, for the simple reason that he who is immersed in the nectar of God realisation cannot act any more than a man in a state of deep sleep can act But a disciplined life of selfless action and love is the only means to that end, and if any one gives up the means and pretends to have reached that end, he is easily found out and great is his fall There is all the

difference in the world between the man who gives up a life of action and the man whom the life of action gives up as being too high for its sphere In regard to such pure and liberated souls who are we wallowing in the mire of selfishnes and sin to lay down the special paths which they should pursue? This does not mean that any one can take up life dedicated to devotion and contemplation irrespective of his or her birth station in life and fitness Each person s Dharma is determined by his birth which itself is determined by previous *Karmas* But the attainment of liberation may be due to the consummation of devotion and self knowledge in the course of previous births or in this birth and is irrespective of the particular social status or function of the individual His actual work in the world of phenomena is determined by his birth and station in life In the case of those who have attained to the highest raptures of God love God vision and cosmic consciousness we can realise that the preliminary stage of *Nishkama Karma* and *Chitta Siddhi* alone could have led to such a glorious and heavenly consummation Such rare and sweet liberated souls will compel our adoration by the very perfection that shines in them and makes even their bodies a temple of purity and holiness

I have stated in my work on *Sir Rabindranath Tagore* about this matter thus "Our sages declare that every man must begin his spiritual progress by service of humanity, that the attainment of illumination by renunciation knowledge, and love is an end in itself and that even after illumination the wise man should do his duties in a spirit of detachment and dispassion so that others might not be led astray by the wise men giving up the performance of duties They declare further that in the case of the very few who have risen to the highest raptures of love and wisdom and are immersed in bliss no worldly action can be expected What action do the votaries of the gospel of work ask them to do? If they pass through a place they spread a paradise of love about them, and whoever is fortunate enough to breathe for a moment in the divine and luminous atmosphere that they carry about them feels a sudden conversion of the heart A compassionate glance from their eyes is worth a thousand religious lectures How few, how very few, can be such souls? In the case of those who are only travellers on the path towards light, the performance of duties is exacted by the sacred law, though they will do their duties in a spirit of detachment and dispassion and as an act of worship of the Lord saying and

feeling Sri Krishnarpanamastu (श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु)—I dedicate it to Sri Krishna Through law the soul rises to wisdom and love and through wisdom and love it rises to the Bliss of the Lord

Mr Tilak in his *Gita Rahasya* says that he bases his doctrine that *Karma yoga* is the final goal of life according to the Gita on the verse which tells us what are the means of finding out the highest essence of a work

उपक्रमोपमहारावभ्यासोऽपूर्वता फलम् ।
अर्थवादोपपत्ती च लिङ्ग तात्पर्यनिर्णय ॥

(The beginning the end the matter repeated the original elements the goal the accessory matters dealt with and the elements of logical discussion are the seven means of ascertaining the purport of a work)

No one can have any quarrel with this method It is in his application of it and in the inferences drawn by him from such application that the erroneous elements have come in It is true that the Gita is addressed to a warrior and that it finally overcomes his disinclination to action Is that a reason for saying that every one should do action irrespective of his *Varna*, *asrama*, *sraddha* or *Vasanas* It is no doubt true that it is the *Ujar*

hud of the Mahabharata which describes the *Dharmas*. But does not the Mahabharata describe both *Pravritti Dharmas* and *Nivritti Dharmas* and do not the heroes of the *Mahabharata* finally turn their back upon the over enjoyed pleasures of life and attain to the highest altitudes of renunciation? The test of *abhyasa* also has been unfairly applied by Mr Tilak Even supposing that the Lord again and again reverts to Arjuna's duty to fight, how does that injunction apply to all irrespective of time and place and circumstance and environment? If the *apurvata* test is to be literally applied, it will be the duty of every man to *fight*, because the Lord did not tell Arjuna to administer the law, or to relieve suffering, or to lead people in the paths of righteousness but to fight Again, the Verse

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दन ।
पार्थो वत्स सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृत महत् ॥

shows to us that the Gita is a scripture given to all and not to the fighter alone Further, the injunctions to attain to the summits of devotion and contemplation are not really less frequent than the injunction to fight The test of फल also has not been propearly applied by Mr Tilak The fruit is the attainment of God and not doing the work of fighting

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

It is not possible to take up the other tests for full consideration here The test of अपूर्वता also cannot bear the strain sought to be put upon it by Mr Tilak The Lord says that he is giving to the world what He had declared to the world at the beginning of creation and which it had forgotten The really valuable element in the Gita is its grand synthesis Mr Tilak s view that in those pre printing days no one said or wrote anything unless he had something original to say is to say the least of it more amusing than conclusive What has the question of printing to do with this matter? It was in the pre printing days that the epic of Mahabharata—much bigger in size than many modern poems put togethe — came to be written In spiritual matters the entire truth has been given by the Veda and who—be he God himself—can improve upon it and give us something absolutely original? He can only bring before our gaze the

radiance of illumination eternally shining there. In the very same way Mr Tilak has misapplied the tests of *arthavada* and *Upapatti* He has done well in pointing out the worthlessness of Western ethical systems based on utilitarianism evolution or intuitionism 'The greatest good of the greatest number' is a mere intellectual bubble Does 'number' include savages and brutes? Who can find out what conduces to the greatest good of the greatest number? If two persons differ as to such greatest good who is to decide between them? This theory gives no prominence to the element of motive in action Suppose the promoters of a railway company bribe the authorities to lay a railway line, that action secures the good of the people Is it therefore moral? The evolutionary and intuitional systems of ethics also are unsatisfactory and illogical The real glory of man is not the *will to live* or the *will to power* but the *will to attain the highest perfection* which is expressed by the term *Mumukshutva* No system of ethics is sound which is not based on a sound system of metaphysics The real defect in Mr. Tilak's method is that in his attempt to socialise all spiritual activities there is the danger of his losing sight of the higher work of our spiritualising all social

activities till in the end the spirit is left face to face with God and in full possession of the priceless and eternal treasure of God-realisation It is not possible to take up here for discussion all the ideas mentioned in Mr Tilak s voluminous book They may be taken up later on from time to time when ever necessary The supreme importance of *Karma* —action whether for legitimate gratification of legitimate desires or in a spirit of renunciation and detachment and dispassion—has been recognised by all The real difference is as to whether it is the final end and aim of life Already India has been torn by empty futile discussion as to the ultimate elements of life—as to whether the soul and God are one or one and yet not one, or two as to whether Lakshmi and Narayana together or Narayana alone forms the Godhead, and so on Mr Tilak has added one more to the distracting discussion of the ultimates As a matter of fact it seems to me that the Lord has expressed himself so clearly and has given to the world such a grand synthesis that it is impossible to mistake His gracious Message I shall endeavour in the succeeding pages to make my position quite clear and I shall at the end sum up the Lord s gracious declaration of Truth in the Bhagavad Gita

The first chapter is an introductory chapter and gives us a narrative of the events that led to the exposition of the great truths of life by the Lord All the *bhashyakaras* and commentators on the Gita pass over this chapter lightly because the doctrinal portion commences only in Chapter II of the Gita

We must remember in this connection the events in the Mahabharata which led up to the Gita On the eve of the great war Vyasa asked Dhritarashtra if he would have the gift of higher vision by which he could see the tragic drama of the war as it developed in the battlefield of Kurukshetra Dhritarashtra declined the boon as he could not bear to see his kindred suffering the fluctuating fortunes of war and preferred his congenital blindness to the offered vision of carnage Vyasa then gave the power of vision to Sanjaya and asked Sanjaya to narrate to Dhritarashtra the events of the war as they took place Sanjaya then informed the King that the great hero and saint Bhishma had fallen in battle Dhritarashtra was stricken with grief and asked Sanjaya to narrate all the events in detail from the time when the opposing armies met in deadly war Sanjaya then narrated the events and in the course of such narration described the faintness of heart that overcame Arjuna and the Lord's teachings to Arjuna

to enable him to take up again his burden of dut in a spirit of detachment and dispassion and sur render of the fruit of work to God

Madhusoodana Saraswati points out that there is a striking similarity between the form of dia logue adopted in the Gita and the similar form of dialogue adopted in the Upanishads e g the dialogue between Janaka and Yajnavalkya This form is adopted to show the greatness of the subjects taught When a great soul is the chosen recipient of the divine message given by the Over soul the occasion is unique and stirs us to the very depths of our being The message lifted into the sunshine of clear sighted peace the noble Arjuna tormented by the darkness of doubt and gloom This fact by itself apart from the doctrines actually taught makes our heart full of faith and puts us into a receptive mood Further by showing that Arjuna was the true and trustful disciple of the Lord we are given a clear idea as to what are the indispensable qualifications of discipleship

This chapter is known as the अर्जुनविषादयोग i e, dealing with the grief which overtook Arjuna when he was face to face with the great issues of life The man who has a clear conception of duty should always feel equal to the demand made on his

energies and services by the imperious call of duty He

> if he be called upon to face
> Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
> Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
> Is happy as a Lover, and attired
> With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired'

Arjuna was overwhelmed by *Soka* and *Moha* (grief and illusion) because his overflow of pity and tenderness at sight of the impending carnage of his kith and kin obscured the clarity of his mental vision The situation is described vividly in a few brief strokes and we are prepared by this Chapter to receive the Lord's gracious message as given to us in the later chapters of the Gita

In Sri Yamunacharya's *Githartha Sangraha* the purport of this chapter is stated thus

> अस्थानस्नेहकारुण्यधर्माधर्मधियाकुलम् ।
> पार्थं प्रपन्नमुद्दिश्य शास्त्रावतरणं कृतम् ॥

(The exposition of the scripture was made to save Arjuna who was agitated by misplaced affection and pity and by deeming his duty as a breach of duty and who sought refuge with Sri Krishna and prayed for enlightenment in a spirit of utter self surrender)

I may point out here that according to Madhusudana Sarasvati and other Advaitic commentators the Gita is an exposition of the basic truth contained in the Mahavakya *Tattvamasi* (That art thou) He says that the first six Chapters प्रथमषट्क of the Gita deal with the त्वं पदार्थ (the soul) that the second six chapters द्वितीयषट्क of the Gita deal with the तत्पदार्थ (God) and that the third six chapters तृतीयषट्क of the Gita deal with the oneness of the soul and the oversoul He says further that the प्रथमषट्क deals with Karma marga, the द्वितीयषट्क with the Upasana marga and the तृतीयषट्क with the Gnana marga He says

तत्र तु प्रथमे काण्डे कर्म तत्त्यागवर्त्मना ।
त्वंपदार्थो विशुद्धात्मा सोपपत्तिर्निरूप्यते ॥

द्वितीये भगवद्भक्तिनिष्ठावर्णनवर्त्मना ।
भगवान्परमानन्दस्तत्पदार्थोऽवधार्यते ॥

तृतीये तु तयोरैक्य वाक्यार्थो वर्ण्यते स्फुटम् ।
एवमप्यत्र काण्डाना सम्बन्धोऽस्ति परस्परम् ॥

He says further that by giving up *Kamya Karma* and *Nishiddha Karma* and by doing *Nishkama Karma*, we become pure क्षीणपाप and attain चित्तशुद्धि and साधनचतुष्टयसम्पत्ति (the attainment of the fourfold *sadhanas*) These *sadhanas* are नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक (the

discrimination of the eternal and the non-eternal) इहामुत्रफलभोगविराग (desirelessness in regard to the enjoyment of fruit here and beyond) शमदमादिसम्पत्ति (the attainment of dispassion, self-control etc), and मुमुक्षुत्व (an over mastering desire for liberation and self-realisation) He says that after such attainment the soul attains the full fruitfulness of श्रवण (hearing), मनन (meditation), and निदिध्यासन (ceaseless and intensive contemplation) Then it attains realisation (साक्षात्कार) through the *Mahavakya sravana*. It is only then that Avidya is overcome, it is only then that *Bhrama* (wrong cognition) and *Samsaya* (doubt) vanish, it is only then that सञ्चित and आगामि Karmas are destroyed, only the Prarabdha Karmas holding sway like an arrow already let loose from the bow and hence bound to expend itself, it is only then that we have वासनाक्षय and मनोनाश consequent on तत्वज्ञान, यमनियमासनप्राणायाम, and प्रत्याहार are बहिरङ्गानि (outer means) leading to धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि, and when निर्विकल्प समाधि is attained, then follows the attainment of जीवन्मुक्ति।

In the above exposition the leading doctrines of the Advaitic school are briefly set out and I shall expound them fully later on The main doctrines of the Visishtadvaita school are given to

us in relation to the chapters of the Gita in these verses by Sri Yamunacharya

> स्वधर्मज्ञानवैराग्यसाध्यभक्त्येकगोचरः ।
> नारायणः परं ब्रह्म गीताशास्त्रे समीरितः ॥
> ज्ञानकर्मात्मिके निष्ठे योगलक्ष्ये सुसंस्कृते ।
> आत्मानुभूतिसिद्ध्यर्थे पूर्वषट्केन चोदिते ॥
> मध्यमे भगवत्तत्त्वयाथात्म्यावाप्तिसिद्धये ।
> ज्ञानकर्माभिनिर्वर्त्यो भक्तियोगः प्रकीर्तितः ॥
> प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तसर्वेश्वरविवेचनम् ।
> कर्मधीर्भक्तिरित्यादिः पूर्वशेषोऽन्तिमोदितः ॥

He says that in the first chapters we have the Karma Yoga and the Gnana Yoga leading to the realisation of the true nature of the individual soul (which according to the Visishtadvaitas is अणु and not विभु or identical with God as with the Advaitins) that in the second six chapters we have Bhakti Yoga leading to realisation of the true nature of Godhead and that in the third six chapters we have the differentiation of Purusha and Prakriti Karma Bhakti and other miscellaneous topics

As a matter of fact though such broad divisions of the subject matter of the Gita are in the main correct and enable us to have a clear view of the

procession of ideas in the Gita according to these two schools of thought, we will find that the Gita lays stress throughout on God love and God-realisation as being the *sole* means of liberation and describes in detail the path of Nishkâma Karma again and again throughout the eighteen chapters as the sole means of attaining God love and God-realisation To avoid concentrating our attention on the few points of doctrinal differences among the various schools of thought and to enable us to have a general idea of the march of thought in the Gita I would say that the first six Chapters deal primarily with the Karma Yoga including Raja Yoga as means for the attainment of purity and concentration of mind, that the second six chapters deal with the nature and manifestations and glories of Godhead and the Bhakti yoga, and that the last six chapters deal with the Gnana yoga and a large number of topics connected with Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga



CHAPTER I

Introductory

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच—

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत संजय ।

Dhritarshtra said—

O Sanjaya, on the Kurushetra which is the field of Dharma, what was done by my people and the Pandavas who had gathered together eager for battle?

NOTES

1. धर्मक्षेत्रे । It was so called because it was a holy spot creating love of Dharma in hearts where such love was not existent before and intensifying such love in hearts where such love already existed. Manu says in Chapter II, verses 19 and 20

कुरुक्षेत्रं च मत्स्याश्च पाञ्चालाः शूरसेनकाः ।
एष ब्रह्मर्षिदेशो वै ब्रह्मावर्तादनन्तरः ॥
एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशादग्रजन्मनः ।
स्वं स्वं चरित्रं शिक्षेरन् पृथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः ॥

Sri Vedanta Desika says that धर्म means *Yaga* and that धर्मक्षेत्र means a place where unrighteous persons were to be slain and righteousness was to be established

2 कुरुक्षेत्रे । The Karmakanda of the Veda refers to it 'तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं देवयजनमास' The Jabala Sruti says 'बृहस्पतिरुवाच याज्ञवल्क्यं यदनु कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनं सर्वेषां भूतानां ब्रह्मसदनम्'. Nilakantha thinks that the Kurukshetra referred to as धर्मक्षेत्र is different from these Sri Madhusoodana Sarasvati refers also to the Satapatha Sruti 'कुरुक्षेत्रं वै देवयजनम्'. In the *Salyaparva* it is said that King Kuru performed penance in the Kurukshetra and got a boon from Indra that all persons dying there should go to heaven As Dhanapati points out, it is not natural to say that Dhritarashtra referred to धर्मक्षेत्र to distinguish this Kurukshetra from other Kurukshetras because such an idea would not have been in his mind,—or to say as Sri Madhusoodana Sarasvati does that धर्मक्षेत्र was used to ask Sanjaya whether the holiness of the place induced the Pandavas to desist from slaughter on the field of battle or the Kauravas to turn away from fighting and thus ruin themseves by giving up the kingdom unrighteously wrested from the Pandavas. It seems to me that the question is quite natural and consistent with Dhritarashtra's

character He was no doubt avaricious but was not without a certain element of purity of nature because the Sri Bhagavata shows in the first Skandha that his heart was turned to God by Vidura s words and he attained salvation by meditation and devotion after renouncing the world He was not a hard ned worldling l ke his sons He knew that Sri Krishna was God incarnate and that Kurukshetra was the field of Dharma After learning about the fall of Bhishma he asked Sanjaya to narrate all that took place in the field of Dharma and in the presence of the Lord of Dharma He had of course a strong bias for his own children but that d d not obscure his mental v sion as to the holy character of the battlefield Hence it seems to me that Mr C M Padmanabhachariar s suggest on that he suspected foul play by Pandavas in spite of the holiness of the place is a far fetched one

3 मामका This shows his partiality for his own side It may also be that he intends a mild rebuke suggesting that his children were really blind l ke himself Some sapient modern scholars who see a racial complexion in everything say that it means Aryas as opposed to the polyandrous Pandavas who formed a different race This is utterly absurd

4 Some commentators understand the verse in a mystical sense Venkatanatha says that धर्मक्षेत्र is Sri Krishna's body of which the life was the Pandavas (मम प्राणा हि पाण्डवाः) and that the Kauravas were consumed by the flame of Sri Krishna's righteous wrath He says further that this secondary meaning is inferable from the words though it is not the primary meaning, and cites as an instance the famous verse of the Ramayana मानिषाद etc by way of analogy Abhinava Guptacharya says that क्षेत्र means the body and that the war referred to is between the righteous and the unrighteous tendencies in man These interpretations have no doubt elements of beauty in them but they are obviously far-fetched and unacceptable

संजय उवाच—

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
आचार्यमुपसंगम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥

Sanjaya said—

King Duryodhana, seeing the Pandava Army set in battle array and approaching the preceptor (Drona), said these words

NOTES

1 आचार्यमुपसंगम्य He did not send for Drona

as a King might send for his General He went to him because of the fear of the enemy which unnerved him because of his lingering reverence for his teacher and because of considerations of policy

2 राजा He was the *[illegible]* king and the unquestioning obedience of Bhishma Drona and other servants of the sovereign to the latter—which is the foundation of social and political solidarity—was thus justified the result being left to God to ordain and grant in His Eternal Wisdom and Love

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

See O preceptor! this great army of the sons of Pandu set in battle array by thy disciple the son of Drupada

NOTES

1 He referred to Dhrishtadyumna in particular and described him as Drupada s son to kindle an ancient hatred in Drona s breast Some commentators say that he even praised the son of Drupada as wise to hint that Drona was unwise in having taught the science of war fully to his enemy

2 It is stated by some commentators that he slyly hinted by placing पाण्डुपुत्राणां and आचार्य together that Drona was specially the friend and teacher of the Pandavas and was partial to them This is a somewhat far-fetched suggestion

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥ ४ ॥

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशीराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुंगवः ॥ ५ ॥

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ ६ ॥

Here are valiant warriors with mighty bows who are equal in prowess to Bhima and Arjuna. Here are Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana, the powerful King of Kasi, Purujit, Kuntibhoja, Saibya who is a great chief of men, the puissant Yudhamanyu, the valiant Uttamaujas, Drupada, and the sons of Draupadi All these are Maharathas.

NOTES

1 His pointed reference to Bhima and Arjuna shows how he quailed whenever he thought of them

2 A *Maharatha* is a warrior who riding in a great car can fight successfully ten thousand bowmen A warrior fighting in a chariot who can fight effectively against another warrior similarly seated is called a *Samaratha* An *Atiratha* is one who can fight against innumerable hosts including many *Samarathas*

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ७ ॥

O Chief of Brahmins ! know the Chiefs of our army whom I mention to you for your remembrance

NOTES

1 द्विजोत्तमे Madhusoodana says that this word may have been used to flatter Drona by praising him as a noble and holy man or to convey a hint that Drona was after all a Brahmin and not likely to be a great and powerful warrior

भवान् भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिंजयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥

They are yourself, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa who is always victorious in battle, Asvatthama, Vikarna and Saumadatti

NOTES :

1. Another reading substitutes सिन्धुराज, for सौमदत्ति. He is Jayadratha.

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९ ॥

And many other valiant men who are ready to lay down their lives for my sake, who wield diverse weapons and missiles of war, and who are masters of the art of war.

NOTES :

1. त्यक्तजीविताः There is in this word an undercurrent of suggestion—not voluntary but involuntary and inauspicious—that they had already lost their lives for his sake.

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥ १० ॥

Yet our force protected by Bhishma, is not sufficient, while their army protected by Bhima is sufficient.

NOTES :

1. अपर्याप्तं has been said to mean (1) insufficient, or (2) unlimited while पर्याप्तं means (1) suffi-

cient, or (2) limited But the first-mentioned meanings are more in keeping with Duryodhana's character and the general spirit of the descriptions of the contending hosts in this chapter. We have already stated that Duryodhana was inspired by fear. A greater number of heroic leaders who blew on conches with specific names is stated on the side of the Pandavas than on the side of the Kauravas. The blowing of such conches is said to have inspired the Kauravas with fear Duryodhana had also a lurking, though mean and unmerited suspicion, that Bhishma favoured the other side. It is further noteworthy that Duryodhana, though his army consisted of eleven *Akshauhinis* while that of the Pandavas consisted only of seven *Akshauhinis*, had already called the latter as महतीं चमूम् (great army). He had already described the great warrior on the side of the Pandavas as equal in prowess to Bhima and Arjuna Above all, there was the fact of Sri Krishna being on the side of the Pandavas.

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ ११ ॥

Therefore, let all of you, each stationed in his place in his respective division, guard Bishma.

NOTES

The presence and inspiration of the Generalissimo are important factors in warfare everywhere and especially so in oriental warfare

तस्य सञ्जनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ १२ ॥

Then the valiant and aged grandsire of the Kurus (Bhishma) blew loudly on his conch Simhanada (of the lion's roar) in order to cheer him up

NOTES

1 Bhishma saw Duryodhana's faintness of heart from afar and blew a high and loud note on his conch to hearten him

2 The verse shows that Bhishma was valiant (प्रतापवान्) though old, unlike Duryodhana who was a coward though young

3 तस्य Some commentators say that it may refer to the army of the Kauravas or to the army of the Pandavas *as a sign of the commencement* of military operations and an assurance that they will be given an opportunity of showing their military prowess or to Sri Krishna as the occasion—divinely predestined—for manifesting the object and the glory of His incarnation

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३ ॥

Then conches and kettledrums, tabors and drums, and cow horns were simultaneously sounded, and the noise became a deafening uproar

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनंजयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६ ॥

Then Krishna and Arjuna, seated in a great chariot to which white horses were yoked, blew their divine conches—Hrishikesa (Krishna) blowing the conch Panchajanya, and Dhananjaya (Arjuna) blowing the conch Devadatta Vrikodara (Bhima) of terrible deeds blew the mighty conch Poundra King Yudhishtira blew the conch Anantavijaya Nakula and Sahadeva blew the conches Sughosha and Manipushpaka.

Notes

1 माधव means the lord of *Sri*, the goddess of

fortune The word hints that success was to be on the side of the Pandavas

2 The separate mention of the warriors and their conches in the army of the Pandavas shows its real might in spite of its smallness of numbers It was fighting on the side of righteousness, the noblest chivalry of the time was on its side, and the grace of God was upon it

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथ ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजित ॥

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वेश पृथिवीपते ।
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहु शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक् पृथक् ॥

The mighty bowed King of Kasi, the Mahāratha Sikhandi, Drishtadyumna, Virata, the unconquered Satyaki, Drupada, the Draupadeyas (Droupadi's sons), and the mighty-armed Saubhadra (Abhimanyu) blew their couches separately on all sides

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥

That uproar rent the hearts of the sons of Dhritarashtra, filling the earth and sky with the sound

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ॥ २० ॥

Then the monkey-bannered Arjuna, on seeing the marshalled Kaurava forces and when the battle was about to commence by the discharge of military weapons, took up his bow.

NOTES

1 अथ This word always marks a change of topic It may refer also to the fact that something unexpected was imminent The word is also said to be auspicious in itself and is a मङ्गलशब्द and introduces us to the blessed Gita

ओंकारश्चाथशब्दश्च द्वावेतौ ब्रह्मणः पुरा ।
कण्ठं भित्वा विनिर्यातौ तस्मान्माङ्गलिकावुभौ ॥

(The two words Om and Atha came out of Brahma's throat, finding a way for themselves Hence both of them are auspicious)

हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।
अर्जुन उवाच—
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१ ॥

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्रणसमुद्यमे ॥ २१ ॥

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥ २३ ॥

And spoke thus to Krishna, O King

Arjuna said—

'Station my Car, O Achyuta, between the two armies, so that I may see who have come here longing for battle and with whom I must fight in this great work of war, and gaze on all who have assembled here for fighting, desirous of pleasing in battle the evil minded son of Dhritarashtra

NOTES

1 आह Being of a noble and deliberative nature he did not precipitately run away from the war under the influence of his impulse of tenderness as Duryodhana forced on the war under the influence of lust of dominion He spoke and awaited illumination

2 अच्युत Arjuna was not afraid that by being between the two armies he would be singled out for attack when unready because it was a time of righteous warfare and hence no one would attack him when he was unready, whatever was the cause espoused by him and because अच्युत—He of the Omnipotent will—was by his side

3 We may note also that consciousness of personal doing which is indicated by the frequent use of the first personal pronoun etc in these lines मे रथ, निरीक्षेऽह, अवेक्षेऽह etc This shows that he was beginning to have the fundamental error of his being a doer According to the Advaitic school of thought the soul is not a doer but is अखण्डसच्चिदानन्द (Infinite Being, Consciousness and Bliss) According to the Visishtadvaita school the soul is no doubt infinitely subtle but is सच्चिदानन्द According to the Dvaita school the soul is not स्वतन्त्र but is dependent on God and the idea of his being a doer is hence an illusion In any view, therefore, the soul has a different origin, nature, and destiny from nature (Prakriti), and it is the identification of the soul with the properties and tendencies of the non-ego that brings about *Samsara*, just as the realisation of the true nature of the soul brings about the bliss of liberation and beatitude

सजय उवाच—

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरूनिति ॥ २५ ॥

Sanjaya said—

Thus addressed by Arjuna, Krishna stayed the great car between the two armies in front of Bhishma and Drona and all the chieftains there and said 'See, O Partha, the assembled Kurus'

NOTES

1 गुडाकेश means one who has conquered sleep—a man of pure sattvic nature capable of perfect self mastery

2 I have shown above how the isolated stationing of the car was not a strategic blunder because that was a time of धर्मयुद्ध and because the Lord of wills was there and no human will could act without His direction

3 Bhishma has described this situation in the beautiful verse that occurs in the first Skandha of the Bhagavata

सपदि सखि वचो निशम्य मध्ये
निजपरयोर्बलयो रथ निवेश्य ।
स्थितवति परसैनिकायुरक्ष्णा
हृतवति पार्थसखे रतिर्ममास्तु ॥

(May my love rest on Arjuna's friends who hearing his comrade's words and stationing the car

between his friend's army and their foes' army drew within Himself by His eyes the lives of the army of the foes)

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितॄनथ पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातॄन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥

श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।
तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेय. सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान् ॥

कृपयापरयाविष्ट विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

Then Partha saw there in both the armies uncles and grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, and grandsons, comrades fathers in-law, and friends Seeing his kinsmen thus marshalled in battle array, and with his heart wrung by supreme pity, he spoke thus in sorrow

NOTES

1 Arjuna s grief is not like Duryodhana's grief Duryodhana s grief was owing to स्वभय, caused by his apprehension of the loss of earthly things Arjuna s grief was owing to अस्वभय caused by his apprehension of various evils to himself to the society and to Dharma by the impending slaughter The two kinds of grief show the real natures of the two men

2 The Lord does not say that mercy is impro per Indeed in the last sloka in Chapter XI of the Gita, He says

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्त सङ्गवर्जित ।
निर्वैर सर्वभूतेषु य स मामेति पाण्डव ॥

There He describes the soul that has risen to the highest altitudes of Love and renunciation It is only he that has soared on the wings of Law and Light that can live in the pure empyrean of Love Mercy which is accompanied by selfish attachment to the world and which sets itself in an attitude of hostility to Law is not a Godward quality

3 As all men are not of Sattvic nature, the world requires दण्ड (the law of pains and penalties for violation and transgressions) Arjuna himself in the राजधर्म says

राजदण्डभयादेके पापा पाप न कुर्वते ।
यमदण्डभयादेके परलोकभयादपि ॥

परस्परभयादेके पापा पाप न कुर्वते ।
एव सांसिद्धिके लोके सर्वं दण्डे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

(Some refrain from sins because of fear of punishment by the king, others refrain from sins from fear of punishment by the god of death, yet

others refrain from sins from fear of one another Thus does the world rest on punishment)

The punishments inflicted by a just king in accordance with law are like the punishments of God Those can no more affect the former than these can affect the latter

4 Hence the unrestricted application of the principle of non resistance will only intensify selfishness and vice and crime in the case of the evil people and will lead to the disruption of society, though there are instances in life as well as in literature (e g the case of Jean Valjean) of a true conversion of the heart brought about by absolute non-resistance Punishment for misdeeds is necessary to reform the ill doer and preserve the moral order of the world Even in the case of the supreme pain and penalty of death for certain atrocious crimes the Hindu doctrine of Karma gives us a real and new aspect of the philosophy of punishment, because the next birth will certainly be all the better for the working out of the great evil by the equally great punishment Ordinary men may not realise this fact and it may be said that this is not demonstrable by reason But those whose consciousness is extended and perfected by yoga can realise the procession of the re incarnations of the soul and

the acts done and the fruits enjoyed by the embodied soul

5 The Hindu religion has always taught *Nivritti* to be higher than *Pravritti* but has taught also at the same time that it is only the man who has followed loyally the law of legitimate *Pravritti* that can tread the higher path of *Nivritti* and attain the bliss of beatitude

6 Arjuna's mercy was strongly coloured through and through by elements of selfishness and egotism He had not lost his love of empire His vow on behalf of Draupadi was ever present in his mind He was thinking of the loss of all kingly pleasure owing to the removal of all relations and friends by the cruel hand of death The ideas of "I" and "mine" were in the forefront of his thoughts The mercy of selfishness is a source of weakness It is different in quality and degree from the divine mercy of absolute unselfishness and love and renunciation

7 Again, our real kinsmen and friends are those who are lovers of God, even though not connected with us by ties of kinship and friendship The latter are not our real kinsmen and friends if they violate the law of God

8 कृपया परया Some commentators say that it means कृपया अपरया i e unworthy pity Others say that it means a ... fit of mercy as Arjuna was overpowered once before by tenderness to his cousins and said

न चाहं कामये पापमाप पीपीलिकयो ।
किं पुनर्ज्ञातिषु वध कामयेय कथचन ।
एतदर्थं मया तात पञ्च ग्रामा वृता पुरा ॥

(*Udyoga Parva*)

(I do not wish harm even to worms and ants How can I wish the death of my kith and kin? That was why I chose five villages before)

अर्जुन उवाच—

दृष्ट्वेम स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ।
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ॥ २८ ॥

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ।
गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ॥ २९ ॥

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मन ।
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ॥ ३० ॥

Arjuna said—

O Krishna! Seeing these my kinsman, gathered together through lust of battle, my limbs

fail and my mouth is parched. There is a tremor in my frame, and my hair stands on end with horror My bow Gandiva slips from my hand, and my skin has a burning fever I am not able to stand steady and erect, and my mind seems to be in a whirl I see inauspicious omens, O Keshava

NOTES

1 Sri Ramanuja points out that Arjuna's grief was due to his nobility of nature, his mercifulness, his love of kinsmen, and his fear of *Adharma* and evil consequences to society He says that Arjuna was महामना (high-souled), परमकारुणिक (very merciful) and दीर्घबन्धु (deeply attached to kith and kin) and was inspired by बन्धुस्नेह, पराकृपा, and अधर्मभय (love of kin, supreme pity and fear of sin)

2 But this tenderness was based on a wrong conception of the nature of the soul and of *Dharma* That was why it became a source of unnerving grief (विषाद) The same love if based on a right notion of the nature of the soul and Dharma would have caused joy and self poise

3 Our duty is to carry out the Lord's commandments irrespective of results and with a full realisation of the nature of the soul While a

state of universal peace is the goal of human endeavour and while all of us fondly dream of a happy warless earth

— 'Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she smiles
Universal ocean washing softly all her warless isles"—

none should shrink from duty Make war against war but never shrink from duty if it involves war for the sake of duty and righteousness Duty is higher than love and mercy which are inspired by selfishness and ignorance, though selfless and wise love and mercy—divine in its fulness and universal in its application—is the highest goal Sri Rama was at the same time embodied law and incarnate mercy He was विग्रहान् धर्म and he said

अभय सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद्व्रत मम ।

(I give shelter unto all Such is my vow)

Love won through loyal obedience to Law will be selfless, dynamic, complete, and universal, and will shine forth for ever and save its object Tenderness which is a compound of weakness, grief, and selfishness will be selfish, powerless, fragmentary, and limited, and will set itself in opposition to Law and will ruin itself and cannot help its object

4. The word आविष्ट in verse No. 27 shows that *piety* was the active agent in Arjuna and that Arjuna became its object. It was deep-rooted in his nature and over-powered him, though he was trained in the habit of obedience to Dharma. His *Soka* (grief) and *Moha* (illusion) had to be dispelled by the Lord by teaching him the true nature of the soul and the true nature of *Dharma*.

5. He whose mercy is in opposition to Law and is coloured by attachments, desires, selfish impulses, and ignorance and who yet wants to inaugurate an era of mercy—as if God who is Law is not at the same time Infinite Love and Mercy—is unable to bring into existence the era that he yearns for, because his love is not the fulfilment of Law and is hence not full but partial, not dynamic but weak, not radiant but clouded, not universal but local in relation to time and place and persons, not divine but human. Absolute, universal, divine, and selfless love and mercy which are the result of fulfilment of the Law would lead to joy and realisation (आनन्द and ज्ञान) and not to grief and illusion (शोक and मोह)

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ।
न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ॥

I see no auspicious result from slaying kinsmen in battle I do not desire victory nor sovereignty nor pleasures

NOTES

1 श्रय —It means auspiciousness or our real good The *Kathopanishad* clearly differentiates *sreyas* and *preyas*

2 कृष्ण He who takes away our sin and grief and draws our hearts to him in a passion of love and devotion Hence that word is used here as Arjuna prays for the removal of his grief and illusion

3 In the *Bhashyotkarshadeepika* there is a suggestion that Arjuna does not want these lower results as they would lead his mind away from the love of the lord and the commentator quotes the verse

यस्यानुग्रहमिच्छामि तस्य वित्त हराम्यहम् ।

(I take away the wealth of him to whom I wish to show grace)

This idea is beautiful but it is not in place in this chapter

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ।
येषामर्थे काङ्क्षित नो राज्य भोगा सुखानि च ॥

त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ।
आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ॥ ३३ ॥

मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः संबन्धिनस्तथा ।
एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ॥ ३४ ॥

What can we get, O Govinda, by sovereignty or by enjoyments or by life itself, when they for whose sake we desire sovereignty and instruments of pleasure and pleasure have come here to fight, abandoning life and riches—teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers, uncles, fathers in-law, grand-sons, brothers in-law, and other relatives? I do not wish to kill them even though they kill me.

NOTES

1 भोग and सुख. भोग means सुखसाधन (means of pleasure) here (Madhusoodana Sarasvati.)

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ।
निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ॥

(I do not wish to kill them) even for the sake of the sovereignty of the three worlds. Will I do so for this earth? What happiness will come to us, O Janardana, by killing the sons of Dhritarashtra?

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ।

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान् स्वबान्धवान् ।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥

By killing these murderous enemies sin will cling to us Therfore we should not kill these sons of Dhritarashtra who are our own kinsmen Oh Madhava, How can we be happy through killing our own kinsmen?

NOTES

1 आततायिन —An *atatayin* is one who makes a wanton and murderous attack The word refers to the incendiary the poisoner, the armed assassin, the brigand the usurper of land, and the seducer of another's wife

अग्निदो गरदश्चैव शस्त्रपाणिर्धनापह ।
क्षेत्रदारहरश्चैव षडेते ह्याततायिन ॥

2 Arjuna argues thus The Dharma Sastra says, do not kill any one (न हिंस्यात् सर्वभूतानि) The Arthasastra allows the killing of the *atatayins* Even here Katyayana prohibits their killing if they are elderly men worthy of reverence It may also be that they should not be killed if that would result in the disappearance of the whole family (*kula*) We may here refer to the verses

आततायिनि चोत्कृष्टे तप स्वाध्यायजन्मत ।
वधस्तत्र तु नैव स्यात् पापे हीने वधो मत ॥

(*Katyayana*)

आततायिनमुत्कृष्टं वृत्तस्वाध्यायसंयुतम् ।
यो न हन्याद्वधप्राप्तं सोऽश्वमेधफलं लभेत् ॥

(*Brihaspati*)

In any event we should follow the mandate of the Dharma Sastra which is higher than the Artha sastra Then sin will not cling to us but will cling to our opponents Yajnavalkya says

स्मृत्योर्विरोधे न्यायस्तु बलवान्व्यवहारत ।
अर्थशास्त्रात्तु बलवद्धर्मशास्त्रमिति स्थिति ॥

3 The golden rule of non-resistance of evil is as fully eulogised in Hindu sacred books as elsewhere But I have already pointed out above its application and stated to whom it is an absolute rule and to whom it is a relative rule

4 Another meaning of the first line is this "Sin will attach only to them the Atatayins, by killing us who are unresisting (अस्मान् हत्वा एतान् आततायिन पापमेवाश्रयेत्)

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतस ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ ३७ ॥

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ॥ ३८ ॥

O Janardana! Although these being over powered by covetousness do not realise the sin in destroying the family and no crime in hostility to friends, should not we, who realise the harm and evil of destruction of family, learn to turn away from this sin?

NOTES

1 उपहत upadhi is an outside cause that colours our character and clouds our vision

2 Arjuna's parade of argument is due to learning as distinguished from truth All his objections and the fundamental wrong notions on which they are based are answered by the Lord in Chapter II

3 His main point is that only that duty which brings about a desirable fruit should be done

फलतोऽपि च यत्कर्म नानर्थेनानुबध्यते ।
केवल प्रीतिहेतुत्वात्तद्धर्म इति कथ्यते ॥

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुले कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ ३९ ॥

न वय प्रभवस्ता त्वामनुकर्तुं गृहेश्वरि ।
अप्यायुषा वा कात्स्न्येन ये चान्ये गुणवृंहण: ॥

2. This grateful sense of the refinement and sweetness of true and tender and gracious womanhood never blinded our race to the demands of social and spiritual life, and our ancestors had further a clear apprehension of the truth that an idolatrous worship of women defeats the very object of worship by rendering it less and less fit to be such an object, because weak and erring human beings when offered the incense of worship that is a due only to God,

"Assume the god,
Affect to nod,
And seem to shake the spheres"

A thoughtful writer has pointed out that there is a vital connection between such idolatry and divorce in some countries in the west The graces of inner life are preserved and kept warm and sweet only when surrounded by the atmosphere of spiritual life and illumined and enkindled by the golden sun of Divine Grace

3. Indeed the entire social system of the Hindus derives its beauty and its immortal vitality from this unique and harmonious combination of

reverence for womanhood and obedience to Dharma on the part of women Such reverence for womanhood is made a source of uplift for men as well as women by being kept within bounds under the inspiration of a higher reverence—the reverence for Dharma as the command of God

4 Manu warns us against disobedience to Dharma in the matter of marital duties etc , because it results in the loss of those family virtues and graces which are the result of centuries of self-restrained culture

कुविवाहै क्रियालोपैर्वेदानध्ययनेन च ।
कुलान्यकुलतां यान्ति ब्राह्मणातिक्रमेण च ॥

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5 The sweetness of family life and the preservation of family virtues which is the only secure basis of national greatness depend upon the existence of *true* and *refined* love The slightest taint in mind is sure to lead to taint in speech and action and to the ultimate corruption of family morality and eventually of national morality Manu says

स्त्रियां तु रोचमानायां सर्वं तद्रोचते कुलम् ।
तस्यां त्वरोचमानायां सर्वमेव न रोचते ॥

Kulluka says in his excellent gloss on this verse

स्त्रियो मण्डनादिना कान्तिमत्यो भर्तृस्नेहविषयतया परपुरुषसम्पर्कविरहात् तत्कुल दीप्त भवति । तस्यां पुनररोचमानायां भर्तृविद्विष्टतया नरान्तरसम्पर्कात् सकलमेव कुल मलिन भवति ॥

6 Hence it is that Arjuna points out the tremendous and far reaching consequences of taint in families due to the taint brought in by the corruption of women In no place in the Gita does the Lord deny this The Lord goes deeper and gives us the fundamental basis of Dharma and devotion which will bar all such taints from coming in in open or insidious forms Arjuna says that the worst result of taint is *Varna Sankara* Individual unhappiness and impurity and even the loss of family virtues and graces are of limited application in time and space compared with that utter un loosening of social bonds and that utter confusion of births and social gradations which are implied in the term *Varna Sankara*, the import and importance of which we must fully understand if we want to understand the Hindu scheme of life

7 This is not the proper occasion to deal at length with the real spirit of the Hindu institution of caste Whatever be the worthlessness of the miserable travesty of it that is now prevalent in modern India, there is no doubt that it preserved the Hindu civilisation from being overborne by the

forces of barbarism and disorder within and without Such an unsympathetic observer of men and manners in India like Abbe Dubois says I believe caste division to be in many respects *chef d'œuvre*, the happiest effort of Hindu legislation I am persuaded that it is simply and solely due to the distribution of the people into castes that India did not lapse into a state of barbarism that she preserved and perfected the arts and sciences of civilisation while most other nations remained in a state of barbarism Such an institution was probably the only means that the most clear sighted prudence could devise for maintaining a state of civilisation

8 The principle of the caste system is social co-operation on a federal basis It enables the society to conserve and perfect hereditary aptitudes It prevents those terrible social unsettlements that are sure to result from frequent encroachments by one social group upon the occupations and pursuits of another It does not take away the incentive to exertion because under the caste system as created and preserved, the four social groups were so strong numerically that efficiency and energy had always free play and free scope for self manifestation and self development in the best interests of the nation as a whole All possibility

of friction due to a tyrannical sense of superiority was taken away by directing the gaze of every man upon his duties rather than upon his rights. Similarly all possibility of friction due to the pride of numerical superiority was eliminated by pointing out that each man must reap the fruit of his own actions independently of others though all might co-operate here and delight in doing evil things. Not a single co-operator in the doing of evil will or can offer the slightest help to save us from the consequences of our sin. Above all each man's gaze was perpetually drawn to the centre *viz.*, God, and he had no time to dig holes to push and bury alive his brother-man or his sister-woman It was also declared that a devout and pious Panchama is dearer to the Lord than a proud Brahmin learned but destitute of the love of God As Prahlada says in his lyric outburst of devotion in the VII th skandha of the Bhagavata.

विप्राद्द्विषड्गुणयुतादरविन्दनाभ-
पादारविन्दविमुखाच्छ्वपच वरिष्ठम् ।
मन्ये तदर्पितमनोवचनेहितार्थ-
प्राणं पुनाति स कुलं न तु भूरिमानः ॥

9. This subject will be dealt with later on in detail in considering verse 13, Chapter IV. The word

Varna has been grossly misunderstood by modern interpreters of our sacred books—more often by so-called scholars within our fold than by the Western *savants*. This is due to an unmeaning hatred of the caste system rather than to a clear-sighted and impartial investigation of the truth. I shall discuss the meaning of *Varna* more fully later on. Suffice it to say here that it does not mean letter or colour or description. It means the commingling of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* in different degrees. But this does not mean any special superiority or inferiority. Individual effort and in a large degree early nurture might—nay, certainly would—so alter the initial endowments of the *gunas* that when a man comes to the age when he can effectively serve his country and better his own personality, the man who was born in a higher group as the result of past *karma* would not be able to bear comparison for a moment with the man who happened to be born in a lower group. Also there might be instances of great souls fit in every way to adorn a higher group being born in a lower group as the result of specific transgressions in other births. Hence the notion of superiority and inferiority if it finds lodgment in the heart of any man will surely lead to his undoing, and further cause serious social dislocation and untold social misery. The burden of

service laid upon each group is in direct ratio to its place in the social hierarchy. Hence every man born in a higher group ought to feel the insecureness of his position keenly because every act of commission and omission will be duly visited with results which could not be easily averted or mitigated

10 Hence as students of this sacred book and especially in view of the Lord's declaration in Chapter IV verse 13 we have to take the view that caste had a divine *origin* though it had a social and racial *development* and either approximated to or deviated from the Lord's plan according to the purity or impurity of each age The whole of the Hindu race is one and entire and all fanciful and mythical divisions of it into Aryan and Dravidian, Northern and Southern, etc etc should be rejected with the contempt which such worthless speculation due to hatred of man or love of novelty amply deserve

11 The paramount importance of the preservation of social levels in their integrity and according to the spirit of the Lord's plan is a fact that should never be forgotten Such preservation is in the main due to woman as wife and mother The special injunctions in our sacred books about

the past she is the preserver of the racial type, and from the point of view of the future she is the transmitter of a great inheritance and a precious tradition

13. Since children cannot be choosing their parents, the Law of God had to take up this task, because if grown-up men and women with their souls under the sway of *kama* (passion and desire) were allowed to do as they liked they would mate without reference to any circumstances other than their own unregulated desires and would say as one great man said that "public opinion is a strumpet and posterity is a piece of nonsense" Heredity is a great and potent factor in the welfare of individuals and races and hence it is that public opinion and law have the seeming impertinence to step between a man and his desire

14 The birth endowment of a person and his early training are a strong—in some instances an overpowering—element in the self revelation of his personality and in his development Proper marital choice in accordance with the law of God, proper marital life, purity of thought and word and deed on the part of the man and woman who must not be engrossed with the idea of marital enjoyment but should rejoice in marital duties and marital

creativeness for the sake of the greater happiness of man and the greater glory of God, and proper early training of children who are the golden links of the generations and the real joys of life and the evidences of the virile self renewal of the race and the God given means of achieving racial immortality—these are the vital forces of racial life and any poison admitted there will eventually lead to racial extinction

15 The physical constitution of man is thus a product a basis and a force It is derived from various elements which stretch far back into the past and no one can say what sin of which predecessor may not cast its shadow on the mind and body of generations unborn It is a basis because it is through it that we have to pass beyond it शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम् It is a force because its purity or impurity has far reaching consequences Only God and Dharma who are eternal can watch and regulate and guide us properly and hence it is that Dharma which is the word of God is positive and emphatic on this point

16 Dr Bryce in his Romanes lecture points out that the free admixture of blood between individuals belonging to different communities and living at different levels of civilisation tends in the

long run to diminish the wealth of character and the potency of civilisation which human communities possess The gain of the weaker community is doubtful and small, the loss of the stronger community is certain and great. Surely there are means of achieving brotherhood other than mingling by marriage The higher and truer and nobler brotherhood is a psychic feeling rather than a physical fact The former is divine in its nature and hence beyond the fluctuations of time and space and the tyranny of greed and lust The latter is of the earth earthy How many children born of the same parents fly at one another's throats!!!

17 Herbert Spencer held the view that even races at similar levels of culture but with special peculiarities of racial endowment and racial vision will suffer loss of power through unregulated intercrossing, as this will unsettle the stability of 'the physiological equilibrium of their inherited racial endowments ' Humanity has achieved great things in the course of centuries of painful travail and cannot afford to allow the momentary whims of individual passion to undo all that had been done while the individuals enjoy the benefit of all that the strivings and sufferings of millions of generations have won for their benefit and their happiness

18 If one individual in a family goes wrong he might mend or be cast out of it and in the last resort human life being short his capacity for mischief will have only limited scope and operation If a family in a group goes wrong the evil will be greater but the three possibilities abovesaid apply here also If a group in a society goes wrong the evil will be on a considerable scale but the abovesaid possibilities will apply though with less certainty But if through the decay of faith in and loyalty to Dharma *Varnasankara* sets in and a whole society goes wrong it cannot right itself and untold suffering and even extinction may follow Such communal mixture will lead to the obliteration of all the great characteristics acquired and preserved through the ages The families composing the corrupted society will be unfit for the reincarnation of great souls awaiting embodiment Thus obedience to the sacred law in this matter is the only means of safeguarding the interests of humanity at large

19 Indeed if the great evil of *Var a Sa kara* is avoided the minor evils corrupting family life will be set right in the course of the succeeding seven generations and the society will right itself and preserve its equilibrium despite temporary oscillations and aberrations

20 Hence we can sum up the results of this exposition The Hindu ideal is federation *not* fusion The integrity and efficiency of society depend on the integrity and efficiency and purity of family life The preservation of प्रजातन्तु (continuation of lineage) has the physical side of the continuity of generations and the higher spiritual side of the preservation of Dharma The family is the real unit of the State Science tells us that the permanent and happy union of man and woman softened and sweetened life, made the continuity and development of civilisation possible, and led to the psychic evolution of man Our view is that if the purity and refinement of the family are preserved and the graces and benedictions of the *samskaras* are attained, a perfect Brahma Jnani would be born in the family and the light of sainthood in him will illuminate the world and uplift the generations preceding and following him This is the positive side The negative side is that *Varna Sankara* will have the various results stated above and will result in racial extinction If we add to the impurities in past births the impurities of family corruption and social taint, who can save us? If our parentage gives us an endowment of purity and power and if the society contributes its electric currents of dynamic purity of ideals we can counteract the

evil tendencies in us and with the help of Dharma attain to the lotus feet of God

> संकरो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।
> पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥ ४१ ॥
>
> दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसंकरकारकैः ।
> उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥४२॥
>
> उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।
> नरके नियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥ ४३ ॥

Such confusion of births leads to hell the destroyers of the family and also the family The ancestors of such persons fall owing to deprivation of the offerings of food and water. By such sins which result in the degradation and destruction of families and which bring about confusion of castes, the eternal family virtues and duties and caste virtues and duties become extinct O Janârdana, we have heard it said that men whose family virtues and duties have become extinct will undoubtedly dwell in hell

NOTES

1 The importance of offerings of food and water in the manner prescribed by the scriptures

is a fact that will be patent to any one who understands the Hindu scheme of life. A beautiful Sanskrit verse says —

> जीवतोर्वाक्यकरणात्प्रत्यब्दं भूरिभोजनात् ।
> गयायां पिण्डदानाच्च भवेत्पुत्रस्य पुत्रता ॥

The divine beings known as *Vasurudradityas* accept the food offered to the Brahmins who represent them and give nutriment in a suitable form to the ancestors in whatever embodiment they may be. It is said that there are 96 *sraddhas*.

2. It may not be out of place here to say what Max Muller says about the Hindu Sraddha ceremony. He says, "I deeply sympathise with your sraddha ceremony; nay, I wish we had something like it in our own religion. To keep alive the memory of our parents, to feel their presence during the great trials of our life, to be influenced by what we know they would have wished us to do, and to try to honour their name by showing ourselves not unworthy bearers of it, that is a Sraddha ceremony in which we can all partake, nay, ought to partake whatever our religion may be. There is a real, though unseen bond of union (*tantu*) that connects us through our parents and ancestors with the great Author of all things, and the same bond

will connect ourselves through our children with the utmost distant generations If we know that and are constantly reminded of it by ceremonies like that of your Sraddha we are not likely to forget that responsibility that rests on every one of us In that sense your Sradh is a blessing on your parents because on yourselves and whatever the future of your religion may be in India I hope this communion with the spirits of your ancestors or *Pitris* will always form an essential part of it

3 I need hardly say that modern reformers of all degrees of conformity to reason and non conformity to revelation (old and new ?—I am speaking thus because new Dharma Sastras and Gitas etc etc etc are now being sprung upon us) who give up the Sraddhas or lessen their importance in our scheme of social and spiritual life are not Hindus in fact

4 The story of Astika in the Mahabharata makes us realise clearly the position of progenitors who leave no proper descendants

5 Hence the destruction of family and caste duties virtues and graces due to confusion of births is a serious menace to individual and social welfare and is the greatest of all foes to the spiritual

foundation of a stable social life It must be prevented at any cost

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥ ४४ ॥

Alas! Alas! we have resolved upon committing a great far reaching sin by seeking to kill our kinsmen out of greed for the pleasures of sovereignty

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥ ४५ ॥

If the armed sons of Dhritarashtra are to slay me unarmed and unresisting, that will be the higher blessing to me

NOTES

Arjuna's idea is that his individual suffering would be nothing in comparison with the great communal and racial evils consequent on the decimation of families and social unsettlements caused by such a war

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥

Sanjaya said—

Having spoken thus on the battlefield, Arjuna sat down in the back seat of his car having cast aside his bow and arrows, with mind overpowered by sadness.

NOTES

1 Such a mood of mind is natural in the case of those who though they are warriors by heredity, training, profession and inclination have their humaner side also developed by a self disciplined and self-controlled ethical life

2. Arjuna's nobility of nature is shown by the grand and unique spectacle of his selflessness' even in his unworthy and *undharmic* and unmanly mood of grief His view was that the universal slaughter impending and inevitable on the battle field will deprive his side of real happiness even if it won the war, because the kinsman whose participation in the pleasures and enjoyments of life was the really valuable element in them would be slain in the war Not merely was there this result alone There would be not merely appalling waste of life and the blighting of all sources of real happiness, but the whole country and society would be overwhelmed by sin The mere

disappearance of one generation was only like the subsidence of one wave on the infinite ocean of time The blighting of the real elements of joy in life to one generation was of limited scope and duration But the sin that arose like a moral epidemic from the field of war was sure to leave its devastating effect on many societies and during many centuries Nay, it would have far-reaching consequences not merely in regard to our successors but also in regard to our predecessors The sin resulting from the slaughter would be of various kinds and degrees and intensities of evil consequences There is first of all the taking away of life, thence follows the extinction of families, thence follows the loss of the white radiance of purity in the womanhood of the race, thence follows the inevitable confusion of births and functions and duties, the ancestors whose original rites are neglected or are performed by unworthy hands fall from their high estate, the young men of the race have not the guidance of the wisdom of the elders of the race, and the bonds of society get loosened and Adharma reigns in the place of Dharma which is the regulative principle of the higher life, and a great racial type designed by God to be the fitting home for the reincarnation

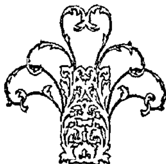
of great souls is in danger of disappearance and final extinction

3 Hence in spite of his grief and illusion his tenderness and nobility of nature and his clarity of vision as to the far reaching social con sequences of individual actions are clear from his words The fallacy in his argument was that he brought into his statement an obtrusion of the individualistic attitude towards l fe and towards the solemn tasks and duties of life that he was obsessed by a concentration of his mind upon the consequenc es of actions instead of doing his work in a spirit of detachment and as an act of worship to God that he did not realise that Duryodhana and his foll owers were fighting against Dharma whereas the tie of kinship is of no importance if it is weighed in the balance of the Divine Law against Dharma that if he did not do his duty the evil consequences to him to his ancestors to his successors and to society would be even greater than the consequenc es of slaughter in war and that if duty was done in the right sp rit the Lord who is Love as well as Law might be left to attend to the conservation and preservation of racial power and fruitf ilness

4 Some say that Arjuna was under illusion though he was full of tenderness and spoke words

of wisdom (प्रज्ञावादान्) Others say that he was Nara and Indra and a seer of perfect vision and that either his vision must be deemed to have been dimmed by his human environments or that he as the typical man questioned Incarnate Godhead fully for all time and on behalf of the entire humanity so as to have a perfect solution of all the perplexing problems of life

Thus ends the Chapter ARJUNA-VISHADA YOGA



CHAPTER II

Sankhya-Yoga

In this Chapter the Lord deals with the major as well as the minor difficulties that clouded Arjuna's faculties and unnerved and paralysed his will As Arjuna's difficulty was fundamental in its nature, Sri Krishna also went to the root of the matter A mere presentation of the doctrine of the blessedness of duty from its outward side would not have convinced Arjuna that his true glory and blessedness lay in his doing his duty in the proper spirit Mere command or exhortation would not have effected that conversion of the heart without which commands and exhortations are but of limited effect, even if they be not entirely in vain It was Arjuna's non perception of the real nature of the soul and of the real means of realising it that was the cause of his obscurity of vision his confusion of the real issues, and his shrinking from the call of duty The divine physician therefore has treated *the malady of the* soul by attending to the root cause as well as the symptoms, and as already explained by me in my general introduction the Lord's method is both natural and effective

Sri Sankara points out that in the first Adhyaya we are shown that *Soka and Moha* etc, (grief and illusion) are the real cause of our lack of self-poise in a state of perfection and bliss Arjuna's attachment to the bodies of his relations, his mental pre-occupations with the pleasurable or painful results of his actions, and his obtrusion of the little self into the concerns of life resulted in his giving up his God-given duty and trying to take up the duty of an ascetic and a monk In Sri Sankara's words

तथा च सर्वप्राणिनां शोकमोहादिदोषाविष्टचेतसां स्वभावत एव स्वधर्मपरित्यागः प्रतिषिद्धसेवा च स्यात्। स्वधर्मे प्रवृत्तानामपि तेषां वाङ्मनःकायादीनां प्रवृत्तिः फलाभिसन्धिपूर्विकैव साहंकारा च भवति।

Hence the Lord teaches the true nature of the soul and the means of realising the same

In Sri Yamunacharya's *Gitartha Sangraha* the lessons of this Adhyaya are summed up thus

नित्यात्मासंगकर्मेहागोचरा सांख्ययोगधीः ।
द्वितीये स्थितधीलक्षा प्रोक्ता तन्मोहशान्तये ॥

(For dispelling his illusion there is stated in the second Chapter the immortality of the soul, the twin paths of knowledge and action based on the doing of duty in a spirit of detachment, and the state of the man of self-poised and self possessed soul).

संजय उवाच—

> तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।
> विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १ ॥

Sanjaya said —

To him thus overcome by pity, with vision obscured by brimming and hurting tears, and full of sorrow, Madhusoodana spoke these words.

NOTES

1 Some say that Sanjaya said the above words to prevent Dhritarashtra from rejoicing that thus his sons would get an easy victory and achieve the triumph of evil in the world But we must remember that this episode occurs after the fall of Bhishma as stated already by me

2 कृपया The tenderness of Arjuna was a selfish feeling and not a divinely unselfish feeling He was thinking that he would lose all the possibilities of real joy in life by the slaughter of his kith and kin His feeling was not that feeling of divine love which has no thought of self and desires only to wipe out the tears of others and dower them with supreme happiness It was after all कृपा and not दया

3 कृपयाविष्ट, This shows that it dominated him It is treated as an active agent and he is

described in the accusative case Madhusoodana says

अर्जुनस्य कर्मत्व कृपायाश्च कर्तृत्व वदता तस्या आगन्तुकत्व न्युदस्तम् ।

4 विषीदन्त विषाद प्राप्नुवन्त Here विषाद is the object and the word makes it clear that the grief was an intruder and not a real element

अत्र विषादस्य कर्मत्वेनार्जुनस्य कर्तृत्वेन तस्यागन्तुकत्व सूचितम् ।

श्री भगवानुवाच—

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिद विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥

The Lord said —

O Arjuna, whence has come upon you at this inopportune moment this weakness of dejection—which is never allowed by the high-souled ones, which bars the path to heaven, and which will destroy your fair name.

NOTES

1 *Bhagavan* means the Lord possessed of the fullness of the six auspicious qualities —the Omniscient and the Omnipotent

ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य धर्मस्य यशस श्रिय ।
वैराग्यस्याथ मोक्षस्य षण्णां भग इतीरना ॥

उत्पत्तिं च विनाशं च भूतानामागतिं गतिम् ।
वेत्ति विद्यामविद्यां च स वाच्यो भगवानिति ॥

2 कश्मल (dirt) is used in contrast with अर्जुन (white) How can there be any dirty spot in a nature of such white and spotless purity? Arjuna says to Prince Uttara about himself and his stainless purity of action

पृथिव्यां चतुरन्तायां वर्णो मे दुर्लभः समः ।
करोमि कर्म शुद्धं च तेन मामर्जुनं विदुः ॥

3 The Lord says that Arjuna's कृपा instead of being praiseworthy and meritorious is ignoble heaven barring, and reputation destroying As Madhusoodana tersely puts it

तथा च मोक्षकामैः स्वर्गकामैः कीर्तिकामैश्च वर्जनीयम् ।

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ ३ ॥

Do not get into this state of impotence, O Partha It doth not befit thee. Shake off this low faint heartedness, and rise, O vanquisher of foes

NOTES

1 क्लैब्य Probably the Lord tells him in a banter that though he assumed the disguise of a

eunuch in Virata's court, he must not be a eunuch in fact in the presence of a great crisis

2 पार्थ Kunti had sent him a message to behave like a true Kshatriya The word probably refers to it and suggests that he should carry out his mother's command

3 The Lord refers in this verse to Arjuna's statement न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः। He asks him to call to mind his prowess which enabled him to vanquish his foes and meet in battle Maheswara Himself

4 Thus the Lord appeals first to Arjuna's chivalry and prowess because an appeal to a man's natural inclination is the best means of overcoming a strange temporary depression

अर्जुन उवाच—

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥

Arjuna said —

How, O Madhusoodana, shall I attack with arrows in battle Bhishma and Drona who are worthy of my worship, Oh slayer of foes!

NOTES

1 Here Arjuna states as his strongest ground the sin of attacking those worthy of reverence, and places in the background the doubtfulness of victory in battle the loss of life's enjoyments through the slaughter of kindred etc How shall I, he says shower arrows on them on whom I should shower the sweetest flowers of reverence and adoration? Is not irreverence for elders a great sin as is stated in the verse गुरुं हुंकृत्य त्वंकृत्य etc ?

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

It is far better in this world to eat what is got by begging without killing our honoured and high souled elders By slaying these elders who are attached as yet to worldly enjoyments, we should taste here alone enjoyments vitiated by the shedding of blood

NOTES

1 Arjuna says that wading through slaughter to a throne and shutting the gates of mercy on

mankind leads to ill consequences here and hereafter

2 This verse is an answer to a possible argument that the elders have transgressed their bounds of duty and cannot be treated with the reverence due to them if they were in the right path It is said in the Ramayana

गुरोरप्यवलिप्तस्य कार्याकार्यमजानतः ।
उत्पथप्रतिपन्नस्य परित्यागो विधीयते ॥

But Arjuna says that by not punishing elders by attack we could ensure enjoyment of a life in heaven whereas by attacking them we get only a bloodstained sovereignty and nothing more

3 The second half of the stanza deals with an assumed objection Bhishma had once said that he was fettered to the unjust cause of Duryodhana by being his state servant and accepting remuneration for his service He had said

अर्थस्य पुरुषो दासः दासस्त्वर्थो न कस्यचित् ।
इति सत्यं महाराज बद्धोऽस्म्यर्थेन कौरवैः ॥

But Arjuna says that in spite of this the elders were his superiors in every way and should not be attacked by him.

4 Or अर्थकामान् may be taken as qualifying भागान्. Then the verse will mean, "By slaying these

elders, we should taste here alone enjoyments consisting of wealth and pleasure dipped in blood ' This interpretation obviates the necessity of giving a reason for calling the elders अर्थकामान् after having described them as महानुभावान् in the first half of the stanza

5 श्रेय —This word is used to mean the higher raptures of the spirit as opposed to the lower enjoyments of the senses (प्रिय) In the Kathopanishad it is stated

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्त उभे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीत । तयो श्रेय आददानस्य साधुर्भवति हीयतेऽर्थाद्य उ प्रेयो वृणीते ।

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ सम्परीत्य विविनक्ति धीर । श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते ।

6 हिमहानुभावान् explained also as one word

हिम जाड्यमपहन्तीति हिमहा आदित्योऽग्निर्वा तस्येव अनुभाव सामर्थ्यं येषां तान् ॥

This means 'those whose splendour and glory and power are like those of the Sun '

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयु. ।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम.
तेऽवस्थिता प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्रा. ॥ ६ ॥

Nor do we know which is the better for us—that we conquer them or that they conquer us The sons of Dhritarashtra, after killing whom we cannot care to live, are arrayed against us in mortal battle

NOTES

1. Some take the first line of the verse as asking, who is the stronger among us—they or we? अव्यवस्थौ हि दृश्येते युद्धे जयपराजयौ says the Ramayana Others take it as asking which is better—mendicancy where there is no taking of life or war which is our duty? Arjuna however seems to be revolving in his mind the relative value of victory and defeat He thinks that by victory he will gain Artha and Kama and lose Dharma and Moksha besides losing his kith and kin—a circumstance which will poison his enjoyment of Artha and Kama

2. It is hence,—so thinks Arjuna—better far to retire from war and beg his food than to fight the battle and reap such disastrous consequences, Perhaps he had in mind the truth contained in the verse which says that great is even the trifle earned without causing harm to others and without seeking the favour of bad men and without overworking oneself

अकृत्वा परसंतापं अगत्वा खलमन्दिरम् ।
अक्लेशयित्वा चात्मानं यदल्पमपि तद्बहु ॥

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः
पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥ ७ ॥

My natural tendency is clouded by faintness of heart and weakness of will, and my mind is confused in regard to my duty I ask thee for light Tell me decisively which is the auspicious path I am thy disciple, to me, who have thrown myself at thy feet seeking grace, reveal the truth and command me as to what I shall do

NOTES

1 Madhusoodana Sarasvati points out how Arjuna has shown himself as one who had acquired *sama la a* etc —the fourfold pre requisite for spiritual illumination called साधनचतुष्टय

He says

'न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे' इति नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेको दर्शित, 'न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण' इत्यत्र ऐहिकफलविराग, 'अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतो' इत्यत्र पारलौकिकफलविराग 'नरके नियतं वास' इत्यत्र स्थूलदेहातिरिक्त आत्मा, किं नो राज्येन इति

व्याख्यातवर्त्मना शम , 'किं भोगै' इति दम , 'यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति' इत्यत्र निर्लोभता, 'तन्मे क्षेमतर भवत्' इति अत्र तितिक्षा, इति प्रथमाध्यायस्यार्थे ससन्याससाधनसूचनम् । अस्मिंस्त्वध्याये 'श्रेयो भोक्तु भैक्ष्यमपि' इत्यत्र भिक्षाचर्योपलक्षित सन्यास प्रतिपादित । गुरूपसदनमिदानीं प्रतिपाद्यते, समधिगतससारदोषस्य अतितरा निर्विण्णस्य विधिवद्गुरूपसदनस्यैव विद्याग्रहणेऽधिकारात् ।

2 I have already shown how *sreyas* means the auspicious path leading to God love and God realisation, the only medicine for all the ills of life

3 कृपण This word is used to describe a miser a man in mental distress, a slave The word is used by Arjuna to show how he is doting over the fleeting treasure of family affections, how his mind is tossed on the seas of irresolution by the storms of doubt, and how he is *a slave to the ties of blood* We should remember also that in the Upanishads a कृपण is defined as one who dies without having attained God realisation

'यो वा एतदक्षर गार्ग्यविदित्वास्माल्लोकात्प्रैति स कृपण '

says Scripture It is this that has obscured Arjuna's vision (स्वभाव) If that is removed his true nature will shine forth

4 शिष्य —True knowledge will come only to a humble disciple and from a true Guru See Gita IV 34

5 प्रपन्न– The nature of Prapatti or शरणागति is thus stated

आनुकूल्यस्य सङ्कल्पः प्रातिकूल्यस्य वर्जनम् ।
रक्षिष्यतीति विश्वासो गोप्तृत्ववरणं तथा ॥
आत्मनिक्षेपकार्पण्ये षड्विधा शरणागतिः ।

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्या-
द्यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं
राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥ ८ ॥

Verily I do not see what will remove this anguish that withers up my senses, even if I should attain unchallenged sovereignty on earth or even the rulership over Gods

NOTES

1 What is the good of blessings here or in heaven to him whose soul is ill at ease ? What profiteth it a man if he wins the whole world and loses his soul ?—Such is Arjuna's anguished feeling Even the joys of heaven end after a time

'तद्यथेह कर्मचितो लोकः क्षीयत एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यचितो लोकः क्षीयते' says Scripture

2 He prays therefore to be led across the Slough of despond to the City beautiful

'सोऽहं भगव शोचामि स मा भगवान् शोकस्य पार तारयतु ।—
says Scripture

3 This verse is his answer to the Lord's words, क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ।

सञ्जय उवाच—

> एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परंतप ।
> न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥९॥

Sanjaya said —

Having thus advised Hrishikesa, Gudakesa the conqueror of his foes, said to Govinda "I shall not fight," and then became silent

NOTES

1 But it was a silence that awaited illumination and prayed for it as he did not go away from the field of battle

2 Thus in this धर्मसंकट he turns for help to his guru, the guru of all gurus, the Adi Guru Sri Narayana himself The disciple must preserve his individuality and at the same time humbly ask for illumination, using his individuality to present all his difficulties to the teacher and get them solved This was Arjuna's method

> तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।
> सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥ १० ॥

Then Hrishikesa, with an apparent smile on his lips, spoke O Bharata, these words to him who was over whelmed by grief in the midst of both the armies

NOTES

1 प्रहसन् इव This is understood in various senses Nilakantha takes it to mean that the Lord smiled as Arjuna spoke as if he were wise though he was not wise Madhusoodana says that the Lord wanted to make Arjuna feel ashamed of his inopportune words and actions and qualifies this remark by saying that this was only a prelude to his instruction Dhanapati takes it to mean that it was a reassuring smile implying that he was prepared to instruct and bless him Others say that the smile shows the good temper of the born teacher and the indication of the teacher s mastery over his subject Sridhara says that प्रहसन् — ईषत्प्रसन्न मुख सन् The lips and the eyes are the most expressive portions of a beautiful face That is why the poets and saints praise the Lord s करुणाकटाक्ष and मन्दहास Mookakavi has devoted 100 verses to each of them The words show that the Lord was then in his benignant (प्रसन्न) aspect The beauty of his divine smile showed his प्रसन्नता He was ready to shower His grace प्रसाद on Arjuna his disciple and devotee

2 सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये may qualify also उवाच This will show that the Lord in His abundance of grace and eagerness to uplift and save ignored the unsuitability of the place for the giving of his gospel.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११ ॥

The Lord said —

Thou grievest for those that should not be grieved for and yet thou speakest words of seeming wisdom The really wise who have attained the knowledge of the soul do not grieve for the living or for the dead

NOTES

1 Arjuna's grief and illusion have led to his abandoning his plain duty and trying to do what is not his duty but is the duty of an ascetic So long as grief and illusion haunt us, they would mislead us away from the path of duty and would make us work with motives even if we are in the path of duty Hence in this verse the Lord goes to the basic evils and removes them The teaching of Arjuna was merely an occasion to give the blessed gospel to all the world Sri Sankaracharya says

further that only jnana is the means to liberation

2 Nilakantha speaks of the twenty verses beginning with this verse thus ब्रह्मविद्यासूत्रभूतै विंशत्या श्लोकै (He says that Arjuna had two illusions

i That the soul was destroyed when the body was killed

ii That his duty of righteous war was an *adharma* By these twenty verses the first illusion was removed Madhusoodana thinks that the first illusion was shared by Arjuna with the rest of mankind and that the second illusion was peculiar to himself There is no room for grief as the soul is eternal

3 अशोच्यान् This means that he grieved in respect of that which, being eternal should not be grieved for The Sruti says जीवापेतं वाव किलेदं म्रियते नाजीवो म्रियते ।

4 प्रज्ञावादांश्च Some take it to mean that Arjuna spoke *words* of wisdom but did not act wisely Others take it to mean that what he said was only seemingly wise Madhusoodana splits up the word into प्रज्ञा+अवादान् (words which the wise would not utter) Both the meanings express two different aspects of the same thing

5. गतासून् Sri Ramanuja takes this to mean bodies. अगतासून् च Sri Ramanuja takes this to mean souls

This lays stress on the fact that the body is mortal and not worth grieving for and that the soul is immortal and not to be grieved for at all दुर्लभो मानुषो देहो देहिनां क्षणभङ्गुरः ।

6 पण्डिता Those learned in the science of the soul Sri Sankaracharya says पण्डा आत्मविषया बुद्धि येषां ते हि पण्डिताः ।

7 Sri Madhwa takes च in अगतासूंश्च to mean इव, Then the verse would mean that just as no one grieves for the living so no one should grieve for the dead, knowing the eternal nature of the soul

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतःपरम् ॥ १२ ॥

Never was there a time when I and you and these kings were not Neither shall there be a time when all of us shall cease to be

NOTES

1 This is a telling statement about the soul being different from the body and being immortal The body had a time when it was not, and there

will be a time when it will not be The nature of the soul is quite different

2 The Lord gives the instance of God for purposes of comparison and shows that the human soul is eternal in the same sense as the Oversoul

3 The Dwaita and the Vishistadwaita schools of thought rely on this verse as proving the multiplicity of souls and their separateness from God as God Arjuna and the kings are referred to separately But the context shows that the Lord is teaching here the eternity of the soul and its separateness from the body and not with the relations between the soul and the Oversoul I shall deal later on with the inter relatedness of the three schools of thought and state what in my humble opinion are the real and apparent points of difference between them and show that the present attempts to demonstrate their utter irreconcilableness have a basis of prejudice rather than a basis of reason or fact

4 Sri Sankaracharya says that the plural is used here to show that the seeming difference is due to difference of bodies देहभेदानुवृत्त्या बहुवचनं ना त्मभेदाभिप्रायेण ।

5 If the verse is to be taken literally so as to justify the affirmation that the souls are sepa

rate, can we argue logically and say that the soldiers have no souls because they are omitted in the verse while the leaders are mentioned, and that the Lord is in no sense superior to us as He and the souls are mentioned as being alike? The Lord is dealing with the truth of things beginning from Arjuna s point of view and we find a natural development of ideas throughout the Chapter

6 Mr C M Padmanabhachariar asks Why should not the Lord say that all are one and that there is no duality! Was He deficient in expression and did He teach dualism when He meant monism and leave Arjuna to twist His words and distil or evolve monism out of them?" The fact is that the Lord did not come into the world to propound this or that school of philosophy but to give us a full unitive vision of truth It is only our mental prejudice that incites us to make each stanza sing to the tune of our preconceived views

7 One argument advanced against the adwaitist position is that if all are one how could there be teacher teaching and pupil? All these exist in the phenomenal plane though not in the noumenon Does the Adwaiti deny the efficacy of scripture or the grace and omnipotence of the Lord? Indeed he says ईश्वरानुग्रहादेव पुंसामद्वैतवासना,

Only through the *Mahavakyopadesa* by God does Mukti come Only he affirms that there is a luminous blessed counterpart of the state of deep sleep where all elements of diverseness are merged in *Sachchidananda* just as the followers of the other schools of thought affirm that there is a luminous blessed counterpart of the variegated diverseness of the world of our waking moments, in which death the vanquisher of bodies has no power over the realm of pure souls living in the radiance of the smile of the Eternal Lover and Beloved

8 In fact many of the arguments and counter arguments advanced on both sides have a basis of verbal difference and not a difference of thought Sri Ramanuja asks, if the soul is the image and reflection of the Oversoul, would any one be so foolish to hold speech with his own image for the purpose of teaching? This is straining the conception of the image too far In the world of phenomena there are elements of likeness and elements of difference between God and the human soul The likeness is in the possession of चैतन्य The unlikeness is in the infiniteness of love and wisdom in God's case and in the finiteness of love and wisdom in our case In the case of the image of our body in a mirror, does either the body or the image

possess any चैतन्य (consciousness)? Does it follow that because no one will teach an image and no image can benefit by teaching, the Lord cannot teach the human soul and the human soul cannot be taught by Him?

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ १३ ॥

As the soul has in this same body the states of childhood, youth, and old age, even so it gets another embodiment. The wise have no illusions in this matter

NOTES

1 This is a very important verse and hence this is the proper occasion for the consideration of the nature and excellences of the Indian doctrines of the immortality of the soul and of the reincarnation or transmigration of the soul Some religions teach transmigration but not immortality; others teach immortality but not transmigration; and yet others recognise and teach both but not the soul's *Sachidananda swarupa* i e its nature as existence and knowledge and bliss Our religion with its full unitive vision of truth has taught us all these three blessed truths

2 Sri Sankaracharya says that this verse shows by reasoning the truth of the immortality of the soul as stated in the previous verse

3 देहिन The word itself shows that the soul is the lord of the body and that the body is its object of ownership

4 The singular in देहिन is explained by some Adwaitic commentators as showing that there is no plurality of souls just as the plurals used in the previous verse are explained by some Vishishtadwaitic commentators as showing the plurality of souls Both the attempts are due to misplaced and misdirected zeal This is not the context dealing with the Oversoul and its relation with the soul That portion of the doctrine comes later Here the Lord combats Arjuna s initial and basic misconception in regard to the nature of the soul

5 Sri Madhusoodana points out that the Lokayatikas say that there is no soul apart from the body, that even in ordinary parlance we say, 'I am stout' or "I am fair" indicating thereby that the soul and the body are not separate, that we talk of Devadatta's death and not the death of Devadatta's body that hence doubts arise as to the separateness of the soul and the body and as to the certainty of the soul not dying with the body, and

that hence the Lord has given us the truth contained in this verse to dispel such doubts

8 The Lord has given in this verse one of the most telling proofs of the separateness of the soul from the body and of the certainty of its not dying with the body The body of a child, the body of the same child as youth, and the body of the same child as an old man appear to all as utterly separate and diverse Yet the man himself realises that he is the same and can never be convinced to the contrary, despite what his images, or photographs, or portraits may show or what his friends and observers may say The three states (अवस्थात्रय) of childhood, youth, and old age are non simultaneous and contrary to one another (परस्परविरुद्ध) But the same personality feels. "I was the son of Devadatta I am now the father of Yajnadatta" If the sense of personality in the body of the child was a necessary result or effect or even concomitant of that state of childhood, there could not be this प्रत्यभिज्ञा or awareness of identity of personality That sense of personality would have made room for an utterly different sense of personality appropriate to the body of youth or to the body of old age There cannot be the link of memory if there is diverseness of

personalities, anymore than I can remember what you experience Can you eat sugar and I revive the memory of its taste in me? Hence this telling illustration brings home to our minds with all the emphatic power of self revelation the great truth of the separateness of the soul from the body, and its continuity and immortality as opposed to the disconnectedness and mortality of bodies A new body should not create doubts in our minds about the soul's immortality any more than the diverse bodies of childhood, youth, and old age can cause such a doubt in our minds

7 Let us now pursue the investigation of the nature of the soul further The Lord himself in the 22nd stanza gives us the telling illustration of the casting off of old clothes and the wearing of new and different garments to enable us to realise the truth of the immortality of the soul and its permanence amidst the diversity of impermanent bodies In the *Santi Parva* of the Mahabharata we have the equally forcible illustration of a man giving up one rented house and taking up another

यथा हि पुरुष शाला पुन सम्प्रविशेन्नवाम् ।
एव जीव शरीराणि तानि तानि प्रपद्यते ॥
देहान्पुराणानुत्सृज्य नवान्सम्प्रतिपद्यते ॥

8 The unity of Self-consciousness (प्रत्यभिज्ञा) being thus indisputable, the taking on of a fresh embodiment after death can cause no breach in its continuity any more than the occupation of a new house or wearing of a new cloth or the passing from childhood to youth and from youth to old age can cause such breach.

9 There are some religions that declare the post existence of the soul but not its pre-existence If the line has thus a forward continuity, despite the shadow of death, what reason is there for denying its continuity backward, despite the shadow of birth? The line of consciousness that is revealed in this birth is that luminous portion between the shadow-point of birth and the shadow point of death Hence it is that Shakespeare declares that "our little life is rounded with a sleep" If there is a waking beyond the sleep of death, why was there not a waking beyond the sleep of birth? It is irrational to postulate the post-existence of the soul and deny its pre-existence

10 The interrogation of Death as the holder of the key of life was made for all time and for the benefit of the world for ever by Nachiketas and the *Kathopanishad* has given us the precious

answer. Nachiketas pressed Yama for an answer and said:

> देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं किल
> त्वं च मृत्यो यन्न सुविज्ञेयमात्थ ।
> वक्ता चास्य त्वादृगन्यो न लभ्यो
> नान्यो वरस्तुल्य एतस्य कश्चित् ॥

Yama replies: नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया and then declares in golden words:

> अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।
> महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥

The nature of the soul and the means of the attainment of self-realisation are then declared by Yama in words that contain the quintessence of beauty and wisdom.

11. What do we see in the world of nature? Insentiency. Now a mere combination of insentient elements can never produce sentiency. Hence the sentient soul cannot be a multiplicity but is a unity, cannot be an effect but is a cause. The insentient cosmos is in a state of perpetual flux but the unitive sentient entity of soul is unchanging and eternal.

12. I shall now deal with the other proofs of the immortality of the soul. In the world of sen-

tiency we have an infinite variety of aptitudes and endowments, and powers. If life is the gift of a new and special act of creation by God or if it is the accidental result of a fortuitous combination of atoms, why should not all men have similar powers, of lives etc. ? He who in the unscientific language of the West, which boasts itself on its scientific greatness is called a prodigy is merely one who has by intensity of effort attained great powers in other births and brings those *Vidyas* with him "trailing clouds of glory as he comes," In the *Kumarasambhava* Canto I, the greatest poet of India shows this in a beautiful verse.

तां हंसमालाः शरदीव गङ्गां
महौषधिं नक्तमिवात्मभासः ।
स्थिरोपदेशामुपदेशकाले
प्रपेदिरे प्राक्तनजन्मविद्याः ॥

18. Let us now take up the method of the analysis of our daily consciousness—the method is called the method of अन्वयव्यतिरेक (similarity and difference). Every day we pass through the three *avasthas* (states of consciousness) known as जाग्रत्, स्वप्न, and सुषुप्ति (the waking state, the state of dream, and the state of deep sleep). Each is marked off from the next by a well-marked line

of difference, and the realm of each excludes the realms of the others But disparate and disconnected as they are, there is a unifying principle of consciousness which by its inter linkings of experience and memory connects them like an all embracing sea connecting the disconnected islands of the ocean On waking up after deep sleep the sleeper says सुखमहमस्वाप्स न किंचिदवेदिषम् (I slept happily and I knew nothing then) Thus the ever-wakeful witness साक्षी is there watching the dance of life in the waking state, the reflex activity of the mind in the dreamful state, and the sheath of deep nescience that soothes and renews the tired elements of mind and body in the state of deep sleep Hence it is clear that there is a principle in man that is separate from the daily procession of the three states Life is a mere succession of days Therefore if the soul is beyond the limitations of the day it is equally beyond the limitations of life and death In the famous पञ्चदशी Sri Vidyaranya says well

शब्दस्पर्शादयो वेद्या वैचित्र्याज्जागरे पृथक् ।
ततो विभक्ता तत्संविदैकरूप्यान्न भिद्यते ॥

तथा स्वप्नेऽत्र वेद्य तु न स्थिर जागरे स्थिरम् ।
तद्भेदोऽतस्तयो संविदेकरूपा न भिद्यते ॥

सुप्तोत्थितस्य सौषुप्ततमो बोधो भवेत्स्मृतिः ।
सा चावबुद्धविषयावबुद्ध तत्तदा तमः ॥
स बोधो विषयाद्भिन्नो न बोधात्स्वप्नबोधवत् ।
एवं स्थानत्रयेऽप्येका संवित्तद्वद्दिनान्तरे ॥
मासाब्दयुगकल्पेषु गतागम्येष्वनकधा ।
नोदेति नास्तमेत्येका संविदेषा स्वयंप्रभा ॥

14 Again it is a part of the human experience that vague memories of past births cast their shadow or radiance athwart the present state of our being. Keen observers who do not go through life as a mere place of business or of amusement have realised and recorded this fact again and again. The most supremely beautiful statement of this fact is that which occurs in Kalidasa's world famous stanza in *Sakuntala*

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान्
पर्युत्सुका भवति यत्सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।
तच्चेतसा स्मरति नूनमबोधपूर्वं
भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौहृदानि ॥

I may mention here a few famous passages in English poetry bearing on this vital and precious truth.

Wordsworth says
"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ,

The soul that rises with us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar,
Not in entire forgetfulness
Nor in utter nakedness
But trailing clouds of glory do we come"

Tennyson says in *In memoriam*

'The days have vanished tone and tint
And yet perhaps the boarding sense
Gives out at times he knows not whence,
A little flash, a mystic hint"

In one of the most beautiful sonnets in the sonnet-sequence entitled *The House of Life* D G Rossetti says

"O born with me somewhere that men foget
And though in years of sight and sound unmet
Known for my soul's birth partner well enough

15 In the Brahma Sutras we have the 54th Sutra in Adhyaya III Pada III which has given us the last and final and perfect word on this topic

व्यतिरेकस्तद्भावाभावित्वान्न तूपलब्धिवत् ।

Sri Sankaracharya has given us a very subtle and convincing piece of reasoning in his famous *bhashya* on this sutra If by reason of the fact that the faculties of the soul are visible only during the

existence of the body you say that they are only effects and resultant of physical causes, then the same body remains even after death. The cause being there, the effect must be there even after death, if your theory of cause and effect be true. Form etc. are physical qualities (देहधर्माः). They are sensed equally well during life as well as after death. If the soul and its faculties be physical qualities like form etc., why are they not realised as existent even after death? Further, the purely physical qualities are capable of being sensed by others. Is any one able to sense anothers's *chaitanya* or memory etc.? Again, as the *Atma Dharmas* are not realisible after death though they are realised during life, we must conclude that they are not physical results but only temporary concomitants. Does the mere fact that theyexist whie the body exists justify us in concluding that they cannot exist when this body ceases to exist? No. They can attach themselves to another body. Hence there is no justification for claiming for the opposite hypothesis the dignity of a proven truth. We may well ask those who assert that consciousness is only a resultant of the physical elements, how can consciousness be a quality of the elements which are the objects of consciousness? How can the subject be a resultant of the object? If conscious-

ness be a result of physical causes it cannot in the nature of things be aware of them How can anything act upon itself? स्वात्मनि क्रियाविरोधात् Fire cannot burn itself though it can burn other things No circus performer can ever stand on his own shoulders It is impossible that the resultant of physical causes can be conscious of the causes or of their other physical effects Can one form be aware of another? Can one sound recognise other sounds? Can sugar be conscious of the sweetness of honey or even of its own sweetness? The existence of a subjective consciousness to which the material elements and their products are objects leads to the inevitable conclusion that they are utterly separate and divergent from it The two entities are as far apart as light and darkness तम प्रकाशवत् विरुद्धस्वभावयोः is the description that we have of them in the famous Adhyasa Bhashya of Sri Sankaracharya We realise that our self is consciousness Hence it must be separate from the body It is permanent because its character and content are same and uniform नित्यत्व चोपलब्ध्यैकरूप्यात् The consciousness that the same personality saw and felt in a particular way before demonstrates this clearly The link of memory is possible only because of this identity of consciousness (प्रत्यभिज्ञा) The argument that utterly demol-

the mental body and in many cases also an invisible physical body exist, and the Western confusion of thought about this subtle physical sheath being the soul is an error to be avoided But they are of value as demolishing the ancient scientific superstition that there was and could be no entity separate from the physical body and surviving the destruction of the latter

17 If we may take the universal speech of humanity as embodying a universal concept of the human mind, we can well refer to such words as 'This is my body,' "My mind feels etc as showing affirmations of the fundamental truth of the separateness of the soul

18 It is also pointed out that the yearning for an eternity of existence is itself a proof of the essential and inalienable immorality of the soul and of its true nature as eternal love and bliss Sri Vidyaranya says in his famous Panchadasi

इयमात्मा परानन्द परप्रेमास्पद यत ।
मा न भूव हि भूयासमिति प्रेमात्मनीक्ष्यते ॥

I may refer here also to Tennyson's famous lines in *The Two Voices* and in *In Memoriam*

'Who forged that other influence,

That heat of inward evidence
By which he doubts against the sense"
(*The Two Voices*)

"A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'
(*In Memoriam*)

19 Again, the revelation of the moral law in the heart as an eternal truth is of the very stuff of our being. The eternal moral law would have no basis or validity or sanction unless the soul is immortal. Tennyson says well about this:

"The wages of sin is death; if the wages of virtue be dust
Would she have the heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove or to bask in summer sky;
Give her the wages of going on and not to die"

20 Again the soul comprehends the infinities of time, space, and causation, and realises the joy of infinite love and renunciation and bliss. Only an

entity which is eternal can comprehend and realise such infinities

21 I may mention also a few other valuable philosophical considerations The subject (ego) must learn its true nature only by introspective analysis and cannot learn it by any other analysis As Hugo Munsterberg says in *The Eternal Life*, No science of the universe can say anything about ourselves who make the sciences To ask what time the real personality itself fills is not more reasonable than to ask whether the will is round or square how many pounds it weighs and what its colour may be The real personality, the subject of will and thought, is not an object in time as it is itself the condition of time From the highest point of view thousands of years may be grasped in one act ' Mr Josiah Royce points out in his book on *The Conception of Immortality* that personality is purposive, that the fulfilment of purpose connot be in one life between birth and death that personality transcends the sense and that these facts prove the truth of the immor tality of the soul In short what is infinite must be eternal and cannot begin in time as an act of creation, for what begins in time must end in time

22 The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, though not exactly in the form of the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation, has been a universal belief at all times and amongst all races of men The ancient Hebrews, Egyptians, and Chaldeans held the belief but they thought that the soul was separate from the body but not independent of it and could not survive the death of the body, and hence the customs of burial and mummification came into existence Among the Aryans it was always believed that the soul was entirely different from the body and had pre existence and will have past existence and hence arose the custom of cremation

23 The doctrine of reincarnation alone can satisfactorily account for the inequalities of life and harmonise God's Justice and God's Mercy and give proper scope for the inevitable law of cause and effect in the realm of human action Also, the fear of death and the instinct for suckling which new born babies have can be explained only on that basis The doctrine is the only rational theory that explains the facts of life as we realise them by experience

24 But after all the most convincing proof is the proof of intimate realisation as a fact of

consciousness in योगजप्रत्यक्ष (yogic vision) Again and again has our Scripture proclaimed this golden truth

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

The contacts of the senses with outer world O son of Kunti, give us the sensations of pain and pleasure through cold and heat etc, but their nature is one of ceaseless flux and they are hence impermanent Endure them with fortitude, O Bharata

NOTES

1 This is an answer to Arjuna's implied question as to why even in the case of one who knows that the soul is beyond birth and death there is the feeling of the *Dwandwas* (qualities) of life like heat and cold pain and pleasure etc The Lord replies that these are ever changing and impermanent and will cease to overthrow our self poised equilibrium when we bear them with fortitude

2 The impermament and the permanent can never be really connected with each other Hence the impermanent sense contacts can never affect

न हि नित्यस्यानित्यधर्माश्रयत्वं सम्भवति, धर्मधर्मिणोरभेदात्सम्बन्धान्तरा-नुपपत्तेः साक्ष्यस्य साक्षिधर्मत्वानुपपत्ते । Thus, the separateness of the soul and the sense co tacts is clear from the fact that the subject and the object cannot be identical साक्ष्यस्य साक्षिधर्मत्वानुपपत्तश्च ।

4. Sri Sankaracharya points out another aspect of variablity in sense contacts besides their transcience Heat gives us pleasure in winter but pain in summer The touch of ice gives plea sure in summer but pain in winter

5 Heat and cold are mentioned as typical and illustrative of all pains and pleasures classified as आध्यात्मिक, आधिभौतिक and आधिदैविक

6 Thus the more we realise our oneness with the Permanent and Eternal Self the less are we affected by the ephemeral flux of life and its ever born and ever dying pains and pleasures. Hence Arjuna is told not to grieve for the pain caused by his apprehended separation from his kinsmen by the cruel hand of death in battle

7 Thus the psychological analysis of sensu-ous pleasure and pain leads us straight to the truth of things. In sleep pain and pleasure disappear The thing that causes pain or pleasure in the waking world disappears and makes soon for mind

born pains and pleasures of the dreamland The beggar of the waking world may be an emperor in dreams The same object may give pain or pleasure Fire in our house or friend's house causes pain, in a stranger's house indifference, and in an enemy's house pleasure The sole cause is अभिमान (abhimana) by which the soul identifies itself with the mind which is the seat of pain and pleasure

8 Sri Madhwacharya makes the verse yield a new richness of meaning by taking the first half of the stanza to have a note of interrogation Do the sense contacts alone cause pain or pleasure ? No They are impermanent *Abhimana* is the important cause It can be given up while sense-contacts cannot be

9 Some commentators interpret मात्रा as meaning the senses Others interpret it as sound etc The main idea is the same in any view

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

O high souled among men! the man of wisdom whom these (contacts of the senses with the outer world do not affect and to whom pain and pleasure are equal and alike is fit for the attainment of liberation (Moksha).

NOTES

1 He is unaffected because of his realisation of the Eternal Self (नित्यात्मदर्शनात् as Sri Sankara charya says)

2 Nilakanta says thet these sense contacts should not affect a man during the waking state or the dreamful state or असम्प्रज्ञातसमाधि.

3 पुरुष The term is used to show that the soul is only a sojourner in the body पुरुं अष्टासु वसतीति पुरुष (He who dwells in the 8 towns)

4 धीर is interpreted as धीमन्त, or ध्यायिन, or योगिन, or धियं ईरयन्त— (The man of wisdom or of devotion or of concentration, or he who controls and directs his mind)

5 If bondage were natural to the soul, it will never go unless the soul is destroyed But it is foreign to the soul and can be removed The illuminer and the illumined can never be one and the same

6 This sameness and equableness can be attained not by flying away from pain and pleasure but by self discipline which enables us to achieve balance of nature

7. Sri Ramanuja says that he who does his allotted duty in a spirit of detachment will not be affected by the sense contacts

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

The unreal and transient hath no being. The real and eternal never ceases to be They who have attained the faculty of seeing the truth of things know the real nature of both.

NOTES.

1 The sense-contacts are unreal and fleeting The soul is real and eternal In the case of every thing we see on analysis that the attribute of existence is common to all though the other transient attributes vary Without the basis of the permanent and eternal the elements of fleeting change cannot exist at all

2 The सद्वस्तु exist always—even in deep sleep because the soul realises सुख (pleasure) and अज्ञान (nescience) then and remembers these on waking up

3 What is unreal? Whatever has परिच्छेद (limitation) परिच्छेद is of 3 kinds—कालपरिच्छेद, देशपरिच्छेद, वस्तुपरिच्छेद (limitation in time, limitation in

space, and limitation by other limited things, (वस्तु परिच्छेद is of 3 kinds—सजातीयभेद, विजातीयभेद, and स्वगतभेद (differentiation from like objects, differentiation from unlike objects, and internal differentiation). Some say that it is of 5 kinds— जीवेश्वरभेदः, जीवजगद्भेदः जीवपरस्परभेदः, ईश्वरजगद्भेदः, जगत्परस्परभेदः. It has well been said. आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ।

4. तत्त्वदर्शिभिः— वस्तुयाथात्म्यादर्शनशीलैः ब्रह्मविद्भि: (those who are *habituated* by discipline and meditation to know and realise the truth and real nature of things). The Sruti says वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् ।

5 Sri Ramanujacharya says that असत् means the body and सत् means the soul.

6. Sri Madhwacharya says that असत् means Prakriti and that सत् means God and that the verse says that both are real. The verse is thus split up न असतः विद्यते अभावः न अभावः विद्यते सतः Another meaning given by him is that असत् means sin and सत् means right and that the verse means from wrong no good can result and that from right no evil can result. In this sense the verse would be an answer to Arjuna's statement पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः । Both the meanings are very interesting but they do

not relate directly to the context The verse is an explanation of the previous verse which says सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते and the verse previous to it which says तास्तितिक्षस्व भारत The soul is eternal The cause of शोक मोह (grief and illusion lies really in the धीप्रपञ्च (the world of mind) The news of a son having been born in a man s absence causes pleasure though the birth was long before then The death of a relation causes pain only on its being communicated to us The same thing that once caused pain now causes pleasure As Kalidasa says in Vikramorvasiya the very objects which caused pain in the absence of the beloved cause pleasure in his presence (पादास्त एव शशिन सुखयन्ति गात्रं बाणास्त एव मदनस्य मनोऽनुकूला । संरम्भरूक्षमिव सुन्दरि यद्यदासीत्त्वत्संगमेन तत्तदिवानुनीतम् ॥) If by steady discipline, concentration, meditation, devotion, and introspection we realise the Eternal, we would not be agitated by the sense-contacts but would attain Eternal Bliss

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १० ॥

Know that to be indestructible by which all this universe is pervaded. There is none that has the power of effecting the destruction of the Imperishable One

NOTES

1 It pervades all as ether is all pervasive It pervades and sustains even ether (akasa) It illuminates everything and is both immanent and transcendent अजायमानो बहुधाभिजायते । तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ।

2 विनाश is देशकालवस्तुपरिच्छेद —Destruction is limitation But Atma is Sachchidananda and is Aparichchinna (unconditioned)

3 What is all pervasive cannot be limited or destroyed for there is no other power to limit or destroy it स्वात्मनि क्रियाविरोधात्—as Sri Sankaracharya says

4 Limitation may be destruction (अनित्यत्व), or loss of body (देहहानि), or liability to grief (दुःखप्राप्ति), or imperfection (अपूर्णता) God is beyond all these He is all-pervasive, eternal, and perfect.

5 We must not confuse this pervasion by God with the attempt of scientists like Sir J C Bose to prove the aliveness of the so called "dead" matter These deal with the pervasion by *energy* which resides in and displays itself as much in 'inanimate matter' as in animate bodies

6 Sri Ramanujacharya says that the verse

refers to jivas (individual souls) and that they are collectively everywhere.

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥ १८ ॥

These perishable bodies have been declared to be in relation to the Eternal Embodied One who is indestructible and inconceivable. Therefore fight, O Bharata.

NOTES

1. देहाः—The plural is used as we have sthula, sukshma, and karana sariras. Nitya and Anasi are both used—because in respect of worldly objects we see disappearance or change and the Lord wants to negative both in regard to the soul.

2. अप्रमेय—It may be asked, is not Atma disclosed by the Veda as प्रमाण, though not by प्रत्यक्ष or अनुमान ? No Atma is स्वतःसिद्ध (self-revealed). Sastra merely removes wrong notions imposed by nescience. Sri Sankaracharya says: शास्त्रं त्वन्त्यं प्रमाणमतद्धर्माध्यारोपणमात्रनिवर्तकत्वेन प्रमाणत्वमात्मनि प्रतिपद्येत न त्वज्ञातार्थज्ञापकत्वेन । Atma is प्रमाता and एकरूप—as Sri Ramanuja says.

3. It has been well said.

प्रमाणमप्रमाणं च प्रमाभासस्तथैव च ।
यत्प्रसादात्प्रसिद्ध्यन्ति तदसम्भावना कुतः ॥

4 युध्यस्व—Sri Sankara shows that this is not a positive injunction It means do not desist from your duty of war Arjuna had come to fight but was overcome by soka (grief) and moha (illusion) The Lord removes the hindrance to his doing of his duty The seeming command is hence an अनुवाद, not a विधि Each man must do his duty and rise through it to devotion and wisdom and attain self realisation अपवादापवादे उत्सर्गस्य स्थितिः (if the exception is overthrown the rule remains) Sri Ramanuja says अमृतत्वप्राप्त्य अनभिसंहितफलं युद्धाख्यं कर्मारभस्व ।

5 Sri Madhwacharya says that the verse means that the souls are God's bodies i e God's images in the spiritual body This view is no doubt beautiful but the context shows that the Lord is now dealing with the utter separateness of Atma and Anatma and is not here dealing with the complexities of thought about the inter relations of the Soul and the Oversoul

6 Each of the 6 words—इम, देहा, नित्यस्य, शरीरिण, अनाशिन, and अप्रमेयस्य–emphasises an aspect of difference between soul and body देहा कर्मफलभोगार्थतया भूतसंघातरूपा (material combinations to enable

the soul to reap the fruits of actions) as Sri Ramanuja says

य एन वेत्ति हन्तार यश्चैन मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नाय हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १९ ॥

He who regards the soul as slayer and he who regards the soul as slain—both are ignorant He slayeth not nor is he slain.

NOTES

1 This and the next verse are taken from the Katha Upanishad by the Lord as authoritative declarations

2 The verse shows that the soul is neither कर्ता nor कर्म It disproves the Tarkika (logicians') theory of the soul's being a *karta* and the Charvaka (agnostic) theory of the soul ceasing to exist at the time of the death of the body

3 Well is it said

आत्मा कर्त्रादिरूपश्चेन्मा काङ्क्षास्तर्हि मुक्तताम् ।
न हि स्वभावो भावाना व्यावर्तेतौष्ण्यवद्रव ॥

This means that if the soul is a doer by nature that quality will never disappear being like the heat of the sun and hence there would be no use in praying for मुक्ति It has also been said

नर्ते स्याद्विक्रिया दु खी साक्षिता क्व विकारिण ।
धीविक्रिया सहस्राणां साक्ष्यतोऽहमविक्रिय ॥

The soul is the witness—Eternal Immutable, Perfect

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि
न्नाय भूत्वा भविता वा न भूय ।
अजो नित्य. शाश्वतोऽय पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीर ॥ २० ॥

He is never born, nor doth He ever die Nor does He, having been born, cease to be He is unborn, immortal, eternal, ever new though ever old He is not slain even though the body be slain

Notes

1 This stanza also is taken from Katha Upanishad

2 It negatives in regard to the soul the modifications inherent in matter —existence birth growth transformation decay, and death जायतेऽस्ति वर्धते विपरिणमतेऽपक्षीयते विनश्यति इति षड्भाव विकारा ।

3 भूत्वा भविता न भूय —is used to negative the क्षणिकविज्ञानवाद of Buddhists *The self is not a series*

of momentary realisations or sensations but is a changeless and eternal truth The fact of self-consciousness that "I am the grandson of so and so and am the same man today as then and am the grandfather of so and so" is clear proof of this.

4 पुराणः—It shows that the soul is older than even the akasa (ether)—the oldest of creations. पुराऽपि नव एकरूप

5. Here न जायते म्रियते is the प्रतिज्ञा (i e) the proposition or fact to be proved कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता न भूयः contains the reasoning. अजो नित्यः represents the conclusion

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१ ॥

He who knoweth him to be indestructible, eternal, without birth, and immutable—whom can such a person cause to be slain or whom can he slay ?

NOTES

1. वेद—The knowing here referred to is "realisation" and not mere intellectual comprehension. It means शास्त्राचार्योपदेशाभ्यां साक्षात्करोति as Sri Madhusoodana says.

2 The Veda says

आत्मानं चेद्विजानीयादयमस्मीति पूरुषः ।
किमिच्छन् कस्य कामाय शरीरमनुसंज्वरेत् ॥

3 Sri Sankaracharya says that this verse shows that the self is really a witness and not a doer and that liberation is through jnana

4 Sri Madhva says that the verse negatives not action but action independent of God

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥ २२ ॥

As a man casting off worn out garments, wears new and different garments so the soul casting off worn out bodies, enters new and different bodies

NOTES

1 This verse shows that the new bodies may be similar to or different from the old body as in the case of new cloths The words नवानि and अपराणि are both used in the verse This shows that there is no guarantee that a soul with a human embodiment is sure to have human embodiments alone hereafter

2 As clothes grow old despite all care, so bodies will grow old and die despite all medical help

3 The Mahabharata gives in the Santi Parva another telling illustration—that of tenant leaving an old house and occupying a new house

यथा हि पुरुष शालां पुन सम्प्रविशेन्नवाम् ।
एव जीव शरीराणि तानि तानि प्रपद्यते ।
देहान्पुराणानुत्सृज्य नवान्सम्प्रतिपद्यते ॥

4 The Gita shows in Chapter VIII verse 6 the importance of the अन्तिमस्मृति (or the last thought) in regard to the future embodiment and this again depends upon the regulated and disciplined life

5 जीर्ण—does not negative the dying of infant bodies It shows that bodies that have fulfilled their purposes are cast away, whether they are young or old

6 Thus there is a law of evolution governing spiritual life as there is a law of evolution governing physical life

7 Death is only the gate of life or rather death is reborn as life The death of the seed is the life of the tree

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ २३ ॥

Weapons cannot cleave him, nor can fire burn him. Water cannot wet him, nor can air dry him away.

NOTES

1. The Scripture describes the soul as अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तथाऽरसं नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत्. The soul is without देशकालवस्तुपरिच्छेद

2. The main idea is that the soul is immaterial and eternal and cannot be affected by the forces of the material universe. A body may be burnt when the house where it is is burnt. But the soul within the house of the body is not burnt when the body is burnt.

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥ २४ ॥

He cannot be cut to pieces, he cannot be burnt, neither can he be wetted by water nor dried by air, he is eternal, all pervasive, firm, immovable, and beginningless.

NOTES

1. Sri Sankaracharya says that the Lord is

repeating what has been already stated because the matter is difficult of comprehension

2 Matter in its fundamental form is indestructible but it changes form perpetually The soul is unchanging and indestructible It is *sacchidananda* whether one with *Paramatman* as the Advaitins say, or in eternal relation with him as the Visishtadvaitins say

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २५ ॥

He is not realisable by the senses, he is not realisable by the mind he is immutable; therefore knowing him to be such, you should not grieve in regard to him

NOTES

1 As the soul has no material form, the senses and the mind cannot grasp it विकार means change of form—सूक्ष्म, स्थूल etc

2 If the mind becomes pure and steadfast, the full glory of the soul is reflected in it दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभि —

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैवं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २६ ॥

Even if you regard him as constantly born and constantly dying, even then, O mighty-armed, you should not grieve

NOTES

1 The Lord merely adds here an argument on the assumption of the ordinary view being right अथ shows that there is a change of topic

2 The prevalent ordinary views are —the Buddhist view that the soul is born and dies every moment, the Charvaka view which identifies body and soul the Tarkika view that the soul is eternal but is born with the *body and dies with it* the view that the soul is born with the body and dies with it though both are separate the view that the soul endures from Kalpa to Kalpa and then dies, etc etc etc The Lord says that even according to these views grief is absurd because what is the use of grieving for the inevitables? Arjuna was afraid of sin and its future consequences In the light of the above views there could be no future consequences In the light of the really correct view the soul is eternal and pure

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २७ ॥

Certain is death to the born and certain is

birth to the dead Therefore you should not grieve for what is irremediable

NOTES

1 This verse merely carries forward the idea of the previous verse If the soul is born with the body and dies with the body, and is then reborn with the body, this cycle will go on whether you will or not Why then grieve for the inevitable?

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥ २८ ॥

All the beings have an unknown beginning, a known middle, and an unknown ending What ground is there for lamentation?

NOTES

1 It is well said अदर्शनादापतितः पुनश्चादर्शनं गतः He came from non existence and has gone back there That is what the spectacle of life shows to one who gazes on its outside If we accept this, the Lord says that there is no ground for grief These verses do not deal with the real nature of the soul, for that has been stated already The Lord says that even if we take the erroneous views of those who do not know the inner truth of things, the attitude of grief is unreasonable and improper

From the next verse the interrupted exposition of the real truth is resumed and completed after a few other special appeals to Arjuna's chivalry and valour

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-
माश्चर्यवद्वदति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति
श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २९ ॥

One regards the soul as a marvel. Another speaks of the soul as a marvel. A third hears of him as a marvel. Even after hearing about him no one realises him.

NOTES

1 This verse is meant to show the difficulty of realising the true nature of the soul. It suggests also that those who know and speak and hear about the Self are rare and remarkable men. The Sruthi says

आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ।

2 To vision Him, to voice Him, and to hear about Him are all wonderful, for He is beyond mind and speech.

3 The verse may mean also that He is realised, taught, and heard as a marvel.

4. Sri Ramanujacharya points out that the context shows that the Lord is referring here to the soul (jiva) and not to God. The soul is different from all material objects and is hence a real marvel, because a marvel is what is unlike all other things.

5. Nilakanta takes एनं to relate to the cosmos and says that the verse impresses upon us the inscrutable character of the world of being.

6. The soul can be realised in *yoga*. It is योगप्रत्यक्ष. It is called wonderful because the realisations of the transcendental and supernormal consciousness appear so to the ordinary consciousness. The Katha Upanishad says:

> परांचि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभूस्तस्मात्परान्पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।
> कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥

7. We realise the supreme in deep sleep, yet we do not know it. Many speak learnedly about Him and many hear about Him. Yet very few know and *realise* Him. Only those whose mind becomes pure and free from sin can realise Him. As Sri Ramanujacharya finely says: महता तपसा क्षीणपाप उपचितपुण्यः कश्चित्पश्यति । It is said also ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते पुंसां क्षयात्पापस्य कर्मणः ।

8 Thus the view that this verse describes the Oversoul and the view that it describes the cosmos have elements of truth but the most appropriate meaning in the light of the context is that it describes the soul as it is beyond and behind the body the senses and the mind The soul is separate from the स्थूल सूक्ष्म and कारण bodies

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥

The soul though dwelling in the bodies of all is invulnerable and immortal O Bharata Therefore thou shouldst not grieve for any embodied being

NOTES

1 The Lord here returns to His own point of view and concludes the present प्रकरण (theme)

2 Death is not annihilation it is no loss of ultimate and essential reality it does not affect the real destiny of the soul Where then is there any occasion for grief

3 As regards this verse also some take it as referring to God and others as referring to the soul As stated by me already the context shows that it refers to the soul though the Lord could

certainly have implied also the real and essential divinity of the soul. The Advaitins hold the soul and the oversoul to be one. The Visishtadvaitins hold them to be separate and yet one, because the Lord has the cosmos and the jivas as his universal body. According to them the souls are atomic and similar, though the bodies differ from *devahood* downwards. The Dvaitins hold also that the souls differ in quality and capacity. Whether the ultimate truth is universal unity or universal equality or universal variety, all are agreed that the soul is *sacchidananda* in its essential nature.

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥

Looking at your own Dharma, also, you ought not to falter. For there is no higher good and auspiciousness to a Kshatriya than a war which does not swerve from Dharma.

NOTES.

1. The Lord means that Arjuna as a Kshatriya prince should regard war as natural to him. The Lord is going to show this in Chapter XVIII verse 43. Also a righteous war is to protect men and establish Dharma through the means of victory and conquest. This is in answer to Arjuna's state-

ment in Chapter I that he will go to hell if he kills men in battle नरके नियतं वासो भवति । न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे । The Lord shows where true श्रेयस् is for a Kshatriya

2 The duty of a Kshatriya to be the armed and victorious protector of Dharma is thus stated by Parasara

क्षत्रियो हि प्रजा रक्षञ्शस्त्रपाणिः प्रदण्डवान् ।
निर्जित्य परसैन्यानि क्षितिं धर्मेण पालयेत् ॥

Manu says —

समोत्तमाधमै राजा चाहूत पालयन् प्रजाः ।
न निवर्तेत संग्रामात् क्षात्रं धर्ममनुस्मरन् ॥
संग्रामेष्वनिवर्तित्वं प्रजानां चैव पालनम् ।
शुश्रूषा ब्राह्मणानां च राज्ञः श्रेयस्करं परम् ॥

3 The Sanskrit word Dharma is untranslatable in English It imports the idea of prenatal tendencies, the idea of morality the idea of scriptural injunction etc It means even God Hence doing duty in the proper spirit is an act of worship of God

4 In Wordsworth s *Happy Warrior* we have a fine description of the man who rejoices in a righteous war and does his work in life in a spirit of joyful elation at his being called to it

"Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright"

5 A righteous war causes no ill to the fighter or the slain as the killing of animals in sacrifice causes no ill to the sacrificer or the sacrificial animal but benefits both This meaning is specially emphasised by Sri Ramanuja

6 The Lord is pleased by His commands to each man being carried out by the latter and not by the latter doing another act even if it be higher; just as a king is pleased by obedience and not by a disobedient doing of a better action.

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥ ३२ ॥

O Partha ! Blessed are the Kshatriyas who are called to such a war as this where the gate of heaven is flung open without any seeking for it

NOTES

1 यदृच्छया means also what is got by divine agency and grace

2 Madhusoodana points out that it may be argued that Dharma Sastra says that you should not kill (न हिंस्यात्सर्वभूतानि) while Artha Sastra pres-

cribes war for Kshatriyas, and that the Dharma Sastra is higher than Artha Sastra and must be followed

स्मृत्यर्विरोध न्यायस्तु बलवा-व्यवहारत ।
अर्थशास्त्रात्तु बलवद्धर्मशास्त्रमिति स्थिति ॥

The Lord shows that the fighting of a righteous war by a Kshatriya is a duty cast upon him by Dharma Sastra and that if a warrior fights in a righteous cause and as a Karma Yogin he attains heaven. As righteous war is enjoined, the text of prohibition has no application विधिस्पृष्ट निषेधानवकाशः।

3 This verse is an answer to Arjuna's question in Chapter I स्वजन हि कथ हत्वा सुखिन स्याम माधव ।

4 सुखिन सुख पुण्य (merit) Sri Desikar thinks that it means antecedent पुण्य The Lord refers to such antecedent पुण्य and also to the prospective पुण्य It is said that warriors attain Heaven

ये युध्यन्ते प्रधनेषु शूरासो ये तनुत्यज ।
ये वा सहस्रदक्षिणास्ताधिदेवापि गच्छताम् ॥
आहवेषु मिथोऽन्योन्य जिघासन्तो महीक्षित ।
युध्यमाना पर शक्त्या स्वर्ग यान्त्यपराङ्मुखा ॥

अथ चेत्त्वमिम धर्म्यं सग्राम न करिष्यसि ।
तत स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

But if thou wilt not fight in this just war, thou wilt be thereby casting away thy svadharma (your own dharma) and forfeiting thy honour, and thou wilt also incur sin.

NOTES:

1. Manu describes Dharma Yuddha thus, in verses full of true nobility of feeling and chivalry of nature :

न कूटैरायुधैर्हन्याद्युध्यमानो रणे रिपून् ।
न कर्णिभिर्नापि दिग्धैर्नाग्निज्वलिततेजनैः ॥
न च हन्यात्स्थलारूढं न क्लीबं न कृताञ्जलिम् ।
न मुक्तकेशं नासीनं न तवास्मीति वादिनम् ॥
न सुप्तं न विसन्नाहं न नग्नं न निरायुधम् ।
नायुध्यमानं पश्यन्तं न परेण समागतम् ।
नायुधव्यसनप्राप्तं नार्तं नातिपरिक्षतम् ॥
न भीतं न परावृत्तं सतां धर्ममनुस्मरन् ॥

2. Hence Arjuna should perform only Dharma Yuddha; and just as it was his duty to do so, it was also his nature to do so. No sin or evil consequences can attach to doing one's duty. The injunctions say:

निर्जित्य परसैन्यानि क्षितिं धर्मेण पालयेत् ।
न निवर्तेत संग्रामात् ।

3. Only the nation that fights for its rights in just wars can preserve immortal vitality. That one will not live which one is not prepared to die for. The fund of altruism in the community determines the longevity of its vital racial life.

4. The Lord points out also that if Arjuna fled from the field, he would be killed by his unscrupulous enemies, and further his previous merit (पुण्य) will go to the King whom he betrays and the King's sins (पाप) will go to him. Manu says:

> यस्तु भीतः परावृत्तः संग्रामे हन्यते परैः ।
> भर्तुर्यद्दुष्कृतं किञ्चित्तत्सर्वं प्रतिपद्यते ॥
> यच्चास्य सुकृतं किञ्चिदमुत्रार्थमुपार्जितम् ।
> भर्ता तत्सर्वमादत्ते परावृत्तहतस्य तु ॥

Yajnavalkya says:

> राजा सुकृतमादत्ते हतानां विपलायिनाम् ।

5. This verse is the Lord's reply to Arjuna's statements in Chapter I:—

> पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ।
> एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ॥

6. Hence it is in the performance of duty that everything lies. As Pope says:

> "Honour and shame from no conditions rise,
> Act well your part there all honour lies."

The story of Dharma Vyadha shows this very well. कीर्ति means honour and renown resulting from the doing of *swadharma* in an exalted spirit of Nishkama and Isvararpana.

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
संभावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ ३४ ॥

The world will always recount thy eternal disgrace. To one who is highly honoured dishonour is worse than death.

NOTES:

1. By the word भूतानि not only men but also gods, sages, and others.

2. अव्यया —means for a very long time.

3. The second half of the verse answers the question, Is not life with dishonour better than death?

4. As Shakespeare says in Othello.

"Good name, in man and woman, dear my Lord
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse steals trash; It is something, nothing,
It was mine, 't is his and has been slave to thousands:

But he that filches from me my good name

Robs me of that which not enriches him

But makes me poor indeed"

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।
येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥३५॥

The Maharathas will think that thou hast withdrawn from the battle through fear Thou wilt be lightly thought of by those who highly thought of thee

NOTES

1 I have already described Maharathas and Atirathas The Lord says that foemen worthy of his steel will think lightly of his valour

2 This estimation of equals is the truest spur to noble action The Hindu benediction is समानानुत्तमश्लोको भवतु (Be esteemed among thy equals)

3 *Akirti* (dishonour) is distant disrepute लघु इति thinking lightly is a near disgrace This is clearly pointed out by Sankarananda

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥

Thine enemies will speak about thee many unspeakable slanders, cavilling at thy prowess. What is more painful than that?

NOTES

1 While honourable warriors will *think* lightly of you as stated in verse 35, enemies will be joyfully articulate in slandering you. They will attribute also false acts of shame to you, seeing an opportunity for slander.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम्।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ ३७ ॥

Dying thou attainest heaven, conquering thou enjoyest the earth. Therefore, O Son of Kunti, arise, resolved to fight.

NOTES:

1 This is in answer to Arjuna's statement
न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।

2 The victor attains earthly sovereignty and *swarga* afterwards. The slain attains *swarga* at once.

3 The attempt of some commentators to make *swarga* mean *moksha* is not acceptable. Such doing of duty is a *Moksha sadhana* (a means of reaching Moksha in due course) while it is also the door to heaven

4 निश्चय means a religious conviction

सुखदु खे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैव पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३८ ॥

Viewing with composure and treating alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, get ready for battle Then shalt thou not incur sin

NOTES

1 The Lord teaches that Nishkama karma leads to liberation and God realisation The appeal to the lower reasons for doing duty is over Here the Lord appeals to the highest reason—that it is the only means of God realisation through purification of mind and attainment of wisdom and devotion फलेच्छां तु परित्यज्य कृत कर्म विशुद्धिकृत ।

2 The minor results stated already are accidental and accessory, just as in the case of one planting a mango tope for fruits, shade and fragrance also come to him unsought for Even if these do not come, Dharma remains by his side to uplift him As Apastamba says तद्यथाम्र फलार्थे निर्मित छायागन्ध इत्यनूत्पद्येत एव धर्मं चर्यमाणमर्था अनूत्पद्यन्त नो चेदनूत्पद्यन्ते न धर्महानिर्भवति ।

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ ३९ ॥

This has been declared to you, the knowledge in respect of the realisation of the Eternal Truth Now hear the knowledge of the means of such realisation—by means of the attainment of which knowledge you shall be freed from the bondage in the form of karma (action)

NOTES

1 The Lord, after various appeals to Arjuna pointing out the unwisdom of his resolve, returns to and concludes the portion of the discourse which gave him the deepest truths of life [illegible], *Jnana-yoga* Henceforth the Lord leads from Jnanayoga to the means [illegible], Karma yoga which is going to be the main theme up to the end of the VIth Adhyaya

2 The view of some persons that the words Samkhya and Yoga here refer to the systems of philosophy going by that name is wrong and is against our traditional interpretation

3 Karma yoga purifies the mind and fits us for Bhakti and Jnana through the grace of god. It removes karmabandha [illegible], the embodiments of *samsara* due to the actions born of motive and

impelled by desire If therefore we do our *dharma* unattached and dedicating its fruits to the Lord *karma* has no power of generating bondage The Isavasyopanishad says

> ईशावास्यमिद सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत् ।
> तन त्यक्तन भुञ्जीथा मागृध कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥
>
> कुर्वन्नवह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छत समा ।
> एव त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यत नरे ॥

4 This does not mean that *Jnana yoga* will not remove *karma bandha* The Lord says in the Gita ज्ञानाग्नि सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन । The Sruti says तपवैवात्मपद विदित्वा न लिप्यते कर्मणा पापकेन । But the impure mind immersed in worldliness cannot at once rise to this height Nishkama Karma yoga will effectively and easily purify it धर्मेण पापमपनुदति । I am quite unable to understand the angry attitude of some modern commentators in regard to Madhusoodana's beautiful exposition on this point

5 The Lord does not mean any reflection on Arjuna as being unfit for jnana yoga Many persons seem to forget in this connection that the Lord gave the complete Sastra to the world making the teaching to Arjuna an occasion

> सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दन ।
> पार्थो वत्स सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्ध गीतामृत महत् ॥

According to Sri Ramanuja the matter is even simpler According to him jnana yoga is the knowledge of the true nature of the jiva It and Karma yoga are both elements in Bhakti yoga which leads us to God Hence he defines *yoga* here thus

आत्मज्ञानपूर्वकमोक्षसाधनभूतकर्मानुष्ठाने यो बुद्धियोगो वक्तव्य स इह योगशब्देन उच्यते ।

7 Sri Madhwa refers to Vyasasmriti which defines साङ्ख्य thus शुद्धात्मतत्त्वविज्ञान साङ्ख्यमित्यभिधीयते। He refers to Bhagavata about yoga इत्थं योगा प्रयुक्ताश्च पुंसा श्रेय प्रसिद्धय ।

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४० ॥

In this Karma yoga there is no loss of effort begun but uncompleted nor is there disaster from non completion Even the performance of a little of it saves us from the great terror of samsara

NOTES

1 In the case of cultivation or house building unfinished attempt is wasted In medical treatment it leads to disasters Karma yoga is unlike these पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते—the Lord says in Chapter VI

2 Karma leads to फल or fruit and itself dies Karma yoga has no fruit in view and never dies The Sruti says तमेत वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसाऽनाशकेन Such moral discipline leads to its own self intensification

जन्मजन्मान्तराभ्यस्त दानमध्ययन तप ।
तेनैवाभ्यासयोगेन तच्चैवाभ्यसते पुन ॥

Love of God leads to perfect purity

सर्वपापप्रसक्तोऽपि ध्यायन्निमिषमच्युतम् ।
भूयस्तपस्वी भवति पङ्क्तिपावनपावन ॥

3 The Sruti says तद्यथेह कर्मचितो लोक क्षीयते एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यचितो लोक क्षीयते—But this does not apply to Karma yoga A mere meritorious act will lead to certain joys in heaven but the fruit of it will be worked out by enjoyment and will disappear But this is not the case with Karma yoga It has been said

तद्यथेहेति या निन्दा सा फलेन तु कर्मणि ।
फलेच्छां तु परित्यज्य कृत कर्म विशुद्धिकृत् ॥

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥४१॥

The Buddhi or knowledge (in relation to Sankhya and Yoga) above said is steadfast and

unchanging The *buddhis* (mental states) of others who are not steadfast and rooted in truth are manifold and endless

NOTES

1 Why is this Karma yoga buddhi—mental state rooted in Karma yoga—steadfast and unchanging? Sri Sankara answers प्रमाणजनितत्वाद् The plans of others are conflicting varied, and manifold because they are not rooted in truth but in desire Sri Ramanuja well says that Karma yoga is here contrasted with Kamya Karma (desireful action)

2 It has been well said

मनो हि द्विविध प्रोक्त शुद्ध चाशुद्धमेव च ।
अशुद्ध कामसकल्प शुद्ध कामविवर्जितम् ॥

3 Sri Madhwa quotes the following beautiful stanza from *Brahma Vaivarta*

बुद्धिर्निर्णीततत्वानामेका विष्णुपरायणा ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽन्यवशायिनाम् ॥

4 Madhusoodana says that एका is used to show that Sankhya and Yoga have the same fruit (एकफला)

यामिमा पुष्पिता वाच प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चित ।
वेदवादरता. पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिन: ॥ ४२ ॥

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ ४३ ॥

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहृतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥

This Buddhi (knowledge of Sankhya yoga and karma yoga) which is of the nature of steadfastness does not arise in the minds of those who are not of illumined mind and constantly speak flowery words, who rejoice in the Vedic ritualistic texts and say that there is nothing higher, who are full of desire and yearn for heaven (*svarga*), who speak words relating to acts which are the cause of births as the fruit of deeds, whose utterances are full of those manifold karmas (actions) which are the means of attainment of enjoyment and power, who are deeply attached to enjoyment and power, and whose minds are stolen away by the words describing the means of attaining them

NOTES

1 The Lord here describes the stream of karma (कर्मप्रवाह) and shows what are the words and actions that keep us circling in the realm of

births and deaths and what lead to liberation and realisation

2 Only that deed is sinless and uplifting and liberating which is the doing of righteous duty in a disinterested and unattached spirit and as an offering to God This is why the killing by a murderer is a sin while the killing by a soldier fighting in a righteous cause is a purifying and uplifting force

3 Some foolish people have said that the Lord here attacks the Vedas How can he who is the वेदवेद्य (known only through the Vedas) and the औपनिषदपुरुष (the Oversoul declared in the Upanishads) attack the Scriptures He himself declares later on

य शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारत ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुख न परा गतिम् ।
तस्माच्छास्त्र प्रमाण ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्त कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

(Verses 23 and 24, Chapter XVI)

He condemns not वेदा (Vedas) but Vedavadas He merely states here that there is a higher path, Karma yoga, which is superior as a step to liberation, to the doing of meritorious acts leading only to heaven whence the soul must return after the

enjoyment of the fruit of the acts is over Such acts are like golden chains which bind as securely as iron chains though they are brighter and more beautiful

4 पुष्पिता वाच The Lord refers to flowery words which like blossoms please at first sight and can further be seen from a distance but have no eternal fruits The higher paths cannot be seen from far and cannot attract us from a distance We must go near to them and persist in them before they will yield the fullness of their divine sweetness

5 The texts referred to are those like the following

"अक्षय्यं ह वै चातुर्मास्ययाजिन सुकृतं भवति।"

"अपाम सोमममृता अभूम।"

"यस्य पर्णमयी जुहूर्भवति न पापं श्लोकं शृणोति।"

6 On the other hand we have such higher texts as the following

"परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन।"

"तद्यथेह कर्मचितो लोकः क्षीयते एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यचितो लोकः क्षीयते॥"

"प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म।
एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढा जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापियन्ति॥"

7 Thus those who do shastraic and good Kamyakarmas but are not Karmayogins are placed below the latter. But let no one lay the flattering unction to his soul that the worldly men bent on worldly careers can place themselves on a level with them because they are placed on a lower plane than the Karmayogins and Sankhyayogins or that there is no virtue or efficacy in the scriptural rites The atheists of today will stick at nothing to cry down shastraic *karmas* but they cannot be allowed to exploit Sri Krishna as their ally.

8 समाधौ Sri Madhwa interprets it to mean समाध्यर्थं According to him it means a peaceful reliance on God He cites as authority the following Puranic verse

न तस्य तत्त्वग्रहणाय साक्षाद्वरीयसीरपि वाचस्समासन् ।
स्वप्ने निरुक्त्या गृहमेधि सौख्यं न यस्य हेयानुमितं स्वयं स्यात् ॥

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

The Vedas have as their theme त्रैगुण्य *i.e.* the sum total of embodied life which is the result of the operation of the three Gunas O Arjuna, thou must become free from these Gunas (qualities), free from the various dualities of life,

ever roote l in the Sattvic quality, unabsorbed in acquisition and preservation and full of attained self mastery through reliance on God

NOTES

1 In this stanza the Lord tells us that the qualities of sattva rajas and tamas are of the essence of the realms of mind and matter the soul being different from them—the Eternal Witness the Eternal Conscio sness and the Eternal Bliss

2 *G a* is properly speaking energy rather than qual ty—the mind being the storehouse of superfine energies which are far subtler and more powerful than the energies that reside in matter This aspect will be dealt with in full in the later chapters of the Gita

3 The Lord distinguishes in this stanza the higher type of men as compared with those who are attached to *Karmas* and not to *Karmayog* *Karmayoga* illumines us and dowers us with Eternal Bliss

4 Sri Venkatanatha explains well a very important aspect Why should the Vedas then teach this intricate maze of Karmas? They appeal to the totality of souls who are of different grades of rootedness in *Samsara* and gives us the totality of

purifying *Karmas* leaving each soul to take up that purifying *Karma* suited to its birth and fitness Those who are not fit as yet to seek final emancipation and in whom the mental energies have to be guided have to be led from a life of aimless activity to a life of purifying *Karmas*, thence to Karmayoga, thence to Bhakti and Jnana, and thence to Moksha Sri Ramanuja says well तम प्रचुराणां रज प्रचुराणां सत्वप्रचुराणां च तत्सलकतरतयैव हितमवबोधयन्ति वेदा. ।

5 The only means to God realisation is the attainment of the pure *Sattvic* state by rising above the state where our Sattva guna is constantly attacked and upset by *rajas* and *tamas*

6 It is only then that we would cease to be constantly unsettled by the dvandvas (pain and pleasure, heat and cold, etc) In verse 14 the Lord has taught us the secret of the victory over these *dvandvas* If the preponderance of Sattva Guna is attained, the *dvandvas* which are the result of the other two *gunas* will not affect us

7 The Lord then tells us the means of the attainment of the sattvic state It is dispassion, the getting rid of the hankering after acquisition and preservation योग is acquisition (अलब्धलाभ) and क्षेम is preservation (लब्धपरिपालन).

8 Then the question arises, how are we to live? Sri Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha explain आत्मवान् as meaning reliant on God The Lord says later on in the Gita तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहं Sri Madhusoodana says well आत्मा परमात्मा ध्येयत्वेन योगक्षेमादिनिर्वाहकत्वेन च वर्तते यस्य स आत्मवान् Sri Madhwa says that the Lord prohibits the acquisition and preservation of what is forbidden

9 Sri Madhwa explains that विषय means "the apparent meaning" and says that the real inner meaning of every portion of the Vedas is the praise of God

वेदे रामायणे चैव पुराणे भारते तथा ।
आदावन्ते च मध्ये च विष्णुः सर्वत्र गीयते ॥

10 There is no inconsistency between निस्त्रैगुण्य and नित्यसत्त्वस्थ It is only through the latter that the former viz, the Self established in its own glory above the Gunas स्वे महिम्नि प्रतिष्ठित can be realised

11 I may note in passing that in त्रैगुण्यविषया विषया is explained thus by Sri Madhwa विष -poison या -dispellers Then the word would mean *dispellers of the poison of samsara* The natural meaning of the words in connection with the context which

exalted a kind must go before we can have the grace of the Goddess of liberation (मोक्षलक्ष्मीकटाक्ष) It is not abstention from Karma that should be aimed at but abstention from motived action which yields us only fleeting and petty results It is *Karmayoga* that leads us to Bhakti and Jnana कषाये कर्मभिः पक्वे ततो ज्ञानं प्रवर्तते ॥

There should be no giving up of duty When the soul is full of God love and God realisation *Karma* itself drops off न कर्माणि त्यजेद्योगी कर्मभिस्त्यज्यते ह्यसौ, सुसहस्तस्य पुष्पवत् ।

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

O Dhananjaya, do thy duties being rooted in *yoga* (i e is an act of worship of God), abandoning attachment, and same in success and in failure Such evenness and equilibrium of mind is called *yoga*

NOTES

1 योग सन्नह्नोपायध्यानसङ्गतियुक्तिषु Here *Yoga* means उपाय (means) The duty should be done as enjoined by the Lord, by way of glad fulfilment of his commands as an act of worship of God, renouncing all results to Him as श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु and

2 The Lord tells us why if Karmas lead to Samsara, Karmayoga should be done It does not bind us The bliss brought by it includes and transcends all the minor joys brought by the performance of the Vaidika Karmas In this view the first of the two translations becomes full of meaning and beauty

3 It has been said in the Sruti about Brahmananda 'एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति" "सोऽश्नुते सर्वान् कामान् सह ब्रह्मणा विपश्चिता"

4 Sri Sankaracharya explains 'Brahmana" as meaning *Sanyasi* Sri Ramanujacharya explains it as meaning *Vaidika*. Sri Madhwa explains it as meaning a knower of God It does not mean one who is a mere Brahmin by birth

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ ४७ ॥

Thy domain is work and not the fruits of work at any time. Do not be the source of further embodiment (as the result of action with desire for results) Neither do thou become addicted to inaction.

Notes

1 The selfish desire for pleasure of however

NOTES :

1. Karmayoga has the magical property of transmuting deeds from being means of bondage into being means of freedom. As the ज्ञानवासिष्ठ says,

विज्ञाय सेवितश्चोरो मैत्रीमेति न चोरताम् ॥

(If the thief is known and served, he becomes a friend and ceases to be a thief).

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥ ५१ ॥

Those endowed with this *Buddhi* (Karmayoga), having renounced the fruits of actions attain wisdom and becoming liberated from the bondage of birth, attain the seat which is beyond all suffering.

NOTES :

1. It is the mind that is the cause of bondage or leads to freedom. Then by *Karmayoga* the mind is purified and action is made a means of uplift and freedom and not a source of bondage. Then the soul is able to rise on the wings of Bhakti and Jnana and soar in the empyrean of divine Bliss.

without even praying that He should show grace as a recompense for doing the duty.

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥४९॥

Mere action is far inferior to the action done with the *buddhiyoga* above said. Seek refuge in such *buddhi* Pitiable are those who work for the sake of results.

NOTES ·

1. Pitiable indeed is he who does not rise through Karmayoga to Bhakti and Jnana and thence to God-love and God-realisation The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says.

यो वा एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यविदित्वास्माल्लोकात्प्रैति स कृपणः ॥
See also

यथाचिरात्सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति विद्वान् ॥

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

He who has this *Buddhi* casts off both good and evil deeds. Therefore strive for such yoga. In the doing of deeds this *yoga* is of magical power.

us towards the objects of the senses in a passion of endless seeking

3 The scripture says

परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायात् ॥ (After examining the action a Brahmin should attain dispassion)

4 In the Yoga Sutras Vairagya is thus defined in terms similar to those stated here by the Lord

दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवितृष्णस्य वशीकारसंज्ञा वैराग्यम् ।

It is the Antaranga of सम्प्रज्ञातसमाधि (inner means) and the Bahiranga (outer means) of असम्प्रज्ञात समाधि Then comes the supreme state described in the Yoga sutras thus तत्परं पुरुषख्यातेर्गुणवैतृष्ण्यम् ।

5 Sri Ramanuja says that Karmayoga leads to Jnanayoga which leads to the realisation of the Jiva s (soul's) true nature As I have already stated in the Adwaita school this is the end of existence as Jiva and Brahma are one Among the Visishtadvaitins such pure knowledge of the self leads to Bhakti and to the attainment of the Lord through Love because self realisation naturally leads to God realisation

6 Sankarananda quotes in his commentary the following beautiful stanza

2 अनामय पद Moksha This is the Lord's gracious answer to Arjuna's request "यच्छ्रेय स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे (Tell me what will be surely auspicious to me)

3 Mark the steps in the golden ladder unto Moksha Karmayoga giving up the fruits of actions attainment of wisdom freedom from the bondage of birth and the attainment of the Eternal bliss of God realisation As Sri Madhwa says well

अथानेनया ईश्वराय समर्प्य बुद्धियुक्ता सम्यग्ज्ञानिनो भूत्वा गच्छन्ति ।

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥ ५२ ॥

When thy determinate reason shall cross the turbidity of illusion then shalt thou attain a calm satiety in regard to what may be heard by you and what has been heard by you

NOTES

1 The Lord sates when the Buddhi already described can be attained

2 *Maya* is the illusion which clouds our sense of the eternal and the non eternal and turns

NOTES

1 Arjuna now realising the highest illumination attained through Nishkama Karma and Bhakti and Jnana asks the Lord what will be the characteristics of the man of perfect realisation because the description of the nature of such a man is tantamount to the description of the means towards such attainment Mukta Lakshanas are Mumukshu Sadhanas

2 In short Arjuna asks of the Lord how a man of realised wisdom will be when in *Samadhi* (union with the Infinite) and when out of *Samadhi*

3 The following beautiful verses in *Vasishta* show how in *Samadhi* and out of *Samadhi* the man of realised wisdom will be full of utter peace of spirit and ecstatic devotion

यथासंसारचालेऽस्मिन् क्रियते कर्म भूमिप ।
तत्समाहितचित्तस्य सुखायान्यस्य नानघ ॥

नित्यप्रबुद्धचित्तास्तु कुर्वन्तोऽपि जगत्क्रिया ।
आत्मैकतत्त्वसंनिष्ठा सदैव सुसमाधय ॥

बद्धपद्मासनस्यापि कृत्वा ब्रह्माञ्जलेरपि ।
अविश्रान्तस्वभावस्य क समाधि कथंभवेत् ॥

समाहिता नित्यतृप्ता यथाभूतार्थदर्शिनी ।
साधो समाधिशब्देन परा प्रज्ञोच्यते बुधै ॥

यदिद मनसा वाचा चक्षुर्भ्यां श्रवणादिभि ।
नश्वर गृह्यमाण च विद्धि माया मनामयम् ॥

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ५३ ॥

When thy determinate reason which was agitated by sacred texts (describing an infinite multitude of means and ends) stands unagitated and firm and is unshakeably rooted in the Supreme then will you attain *yoga* (God realisation)

NOTES

1 The Lord tells us when such wisdom will lead to God realisation

2 Sri Madhwa holds that even among Muktas there are grades of bliss This is not admitted by the other schools

अर्जुन उवाच—

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधी किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम् ॥

O Keshava ! How will a man who is of steadfast and realised wisdom and who has attained *samadhi* be described by others? How will his utterance be to others? How will he sit and behave and what will be his movements?

3 As already stated the description of the qualities of a Mukta is given as it is a description of the *Sadhanas* of the Mumukshu To the former they are natural by the latter they are to be attained

उत्पन्नात्मप्रबोधस्य ह्यद्वेष्टृत्वादयो गुणा ।
भवन्त्ययत्नतस्तस्य न तु साधकरूपिण ॥

4 This Stanza echoes the famous passage in the Upanishads

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि स्थिता ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥

5 There are seven planes (भूमिका) of *Samadhi yoga* Of these the first three are said to correspond in the higher plane to our waking state (जाग्रदवस्था), the fourth is said to correspond to our स्वप्नावस्था, the fifth is the सुषुप्त्यवस्था the sixth is the गाढसुषुप्ति, and the seventh is the *Turiyavastha* The man who has reached this highest stage is thus described in the Bhagavata

देहं च नश्वरमवस्थितमुत्थितं वा
सिद्धो न पश्यति यतोऽध्यगमत्स्वरूपम् ।
दैवादुपेतमथ दैववशादपेतं
वासो यथा परिकृतं मदिरामदान्ध ॥

6 The Veda declares that the man of realised renunciation attains the highest bliss श्रोत्रियस्याकामहतस्य

4 In the Vasishta the nature of the man of realised wisdom engaged in his duties when out of Samadhi is thus beautifully described by comparison with the mental state of a woman devoted in heart to her lover though doing all her household work

परव्यसनिनी नारी व्यग्रापि गृहकर्मणि ॥
तदेवास्वादयत्यन्तः परसङ्गरसायनम् ॥
एवं तत्त्वे परे शुद्धे धीरो विश्रान्तिमागतः ।
तदेवास्वादयत्यन्तर्बहिर्व्यवहरन्नपि ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच —

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ ५५ ॥

When a man entirely renounces all the desires of the mind and rejoices by himself in the Self he is described as a *Sthitaprajna* (a man of steady and realised) wisdom

NOTES

1 The remainder of this chapter is an answer to the above question by Arjuna

2 The renunciation of desires and of the petty fleeting pain tinged joys born of their realisation does not mean a deadness of soul but means the attainment of Infinite Bliss

3 Sri Ramanujacharya's view is that verses 55 to 58 deal with the stages of perfection in the descending order Sri Madhvacharya's view is that verses 56 to 58 elucidate the various *Kamas* (desires) from which the seer is free All the teachers are agreed that these and the succeeding verses up to the end of the chapter describe the seer of attained wisdom and realisation

4 Sri Madhva says well प्रारब्धकर्मणा ईषत्तिरो-हितब्रह्मणा वासनया प्रायत्नाभिसंधिपूर्विका गमनादयस्तस्य सम्भवन्ति

5 मुनि मननशील । one habitually given to thinking and contemplation

6 As already stated these descriptions of the seer are descriptions of the *Sadhanas* of the man eager for wisdom

विद्यास्थितये प्राग्या साधनभूता प्रयत्ननिष्पाद्या ।
लक्षणभूतास्तु पुन स्वभावतस्ते स्थिता स्थितप्रज्ञे ॥
जीवन्मुक्तिरितीमां वदन्त्यवस्थां स्थितात्मसंबोधाम् ।
बाधितभेदप्रतिभामबाधितात्मप्रबोधसामर्थ्यात् ॥

Sri Sankaracharya says the same truth thus सर्वत्रैव ह्यध्यात्मशास्त्रे कृतार्थलक्षणानि तान्येव साधनान्युपदिश्यन्ते ।

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७ ॥

न केचन जगद्भावास्तत्त्वज्ञ रञ्जयन्त्यमी ।
नागर नागरीकान्त कुग्रामललना इव ॥

7 Kama is due to sankalpa which is due to Vasana

काम जानामि ते मूल सङ्कल्पात्किल जायसे ।

By Nishkama Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana we must conquer them and attain the Ineffable and infinite Bliss of God realisation

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

He is called the sage of steadfast wisdom whose mind is not oppressed by the anguish of adversity, is devoid of yearning for pleasures, and is free from attachment, fear, and anger.

NOTES

1 The mind is not a mere theatre of fleeting sensations It can be concentrated and purified so as to realise the Self This method is called *yoga*.

2 This and the next stanza are the Lord's reply to Arjuna's question किं प्रभाषेत etc., How will such a seer full of steady wisdom speak to others? This is Sri Madhusoodana's view Verse 55 deals with the sage in *Samadhi* and the later verses deal with the sage out of *Samadhi*

sage shrinks in fear from the touch of worldly illusions as a t stone shrinks from rough contact

2 Sri Madhusoodana says that this and the next five verses answer Arjuna s question किमासीत ?, How will the seer sit and behave ? How will he when come out of Samadhi control his senses ?

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९ ॥

The objects of the senses turn back from him who practises abstinence They however leave the relish behind Even this disappears when the Supreme is realised

NOTES

1 This stanza gives us a great spiritual truth Only by renunciation, and not by revelling in the senses can the scattered faculties of the mind be concentrated and purified Even then the relish for the fleeting things of life remains owing to long revelling in them The relish can cease to be only when the sweetest sweetness of God love and God realisation shines in our hearts

2 आहार Whatever is brought in to any of the senses निराहारस्य विषयेभ्य प्रत्याहृतेन्द्रियस्य (Sri Ramanujacharya)

His wisdom is well rooted who is unattached in relation to all and who has not got rejoicing or aversion when he comes by auspicious or inauspicious consequences

NOTES

1 This does not mean indifference to God The object of detachment from worldly objects is to perfect our love of God As Sri Madhusoodana says well भगवति परमात्मनि तु सर्वथा सस्नेहवान् भवेदेव अनात्मस्नेहाभावस्य तदर्थत्वात् इति द्रष्टव्यम् ।

2 The conquest of the senses is not the deadening of the senses but their wise direction and control by a pure will

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५८ ॥

When as a tortoise draws in its limbs he withdraws his senses well from their objects his wisdom attains perfect equipoise

NOTES

1 The simile is an illuminating simile and shows that as the tortoise naturally and without strain draws in its limbs so a sage must attain a natural and easy mastery over the senses and attain the bliss of *Samadhi* Neelakantha says that a

sage shrinks in fear from the touch of worldly illusions as *a tortoise shrinks from* rough contact

2 Sri Madhusoodana says that this and the next five verses answer Arjuna's question किमासीत व्रज, How will the seer sit and behave ? How will he, when come out of Samadhi, control his senses ?

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९ ॥

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3. The Bhagavata says:

इन्द्रियाणि जयन्त्याशु निराहारा मनीषिणः ।
वर्जयित्वा तु रसनामसौ रसे तु वर्धते ॥

4. Sri Ramanuja says that this verse shows the difficulty of the attainment of Jnana Nishtha and the means of its attainment

5 Sri Sankara says that this verse shows that one who by effort closes the doors of the senses can keep out the objects but the taste and relish for these will remain. God-vision will accomplish this conquest of relish and desire

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ ६० ॥

O son of Kunti, even in the case of a striving and wise man, the turbulent senses impetuously snatch away his mind.

NOTES·

1. This verse describes an intermediate stage—not pure *sattva* or mere *tamas*. It describes not the seer or the sleeper but the scholar. It describes the urgent need of बाह्येन्द्रियनिग्रह.

2. The Lord says that mighty effort and prayer and devotion will on the one hand slowly lessen the hold of the senses on us and on the other

hand bring us nearer to the attainment of God-vision which alone will finally lead to the conquest of the senses and the subduing of the relish for worldly enjoyments

3 The power of the senses is thus described in Manu Chap II Verse 215

मात्रा स्वस्रा दुहित्रा वा न विविक्तासनो भवेत् ।
बलवानिन्द्रियग्रामो विद्वांसमपि कर्षति ॥

4 Viveka (discrimination) is the King and Yatna (effort) is the minister With their help and the help of the army of prayer and devotion and good thoughts and words and deeds we must beat off the investing armies of the senses

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६१ ॥

He should well control them all and sit in tranquil meditation regarding Me as the Supreme His wisdom is steady whose senses are under his control

NOTES

1 If we seek the help of the king the thieves do not hurt us but become our servants So if we seek and get the Lord's grace, the senses will not

degrade us but will be our servants, serviceable and pure

न वासुदेवभक्तानामशुभं विद्यते क्वचित् ।
निस्योत्सवो भवेत्तेषां नित्यश्रीर्नित्यमङ्गलम् ।
येषां मनःस्थो भगवान्मङ्गलायतनं हरिः ॥

लाभस्तेषां जयस्तेषां कुतस्तेषां पराभवः ।
येषामिन्दीवरश्यामो हृदयस्थः सुप्रतिष्ठितः ॥

2 God love leads to conquest of the senses and leads to God-vision

3 The Katha Upanishad says well

विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान्नरः ।
सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥

यथाग्निरुद्धतशिखः कक्षं दहति सानिलः ।
तथा चित्तस्थितो विष्णुर्योगिनां सर्वकिल्बिषम् ॥

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ ६३ ॥

Attachment to objects is born of musing on them, desire is born of attachment, anger is born of desire, delusion comes from anger, loss of memory results from delusion, from loss of

memory comes the ruin of discrimination, and through the ruin of discrimination he is lost

Notes

1 बाह्येन्द्रियनिग्रह (control of the outer senses) by itself is of no use because mental contemplation of the objects will lead to attachment and eventually to moral destruction Hence मनोनिग्रह is equally essential

2 The *Saṃskāra* of *Bhāvanā* is the basis of knowledge, and that of *smṛti* is the basis of memory The *saṃskāra* (mental impression) of *smṛti* (memory) is at the very basis of our conceptual and discriminative thought When therefore intense passion clouds our memory eventually our discriminative power which alone can distinguish right and wrong is lost Such loss is the real loss of the man himself, because then he loses his Purushartha and what greater loss can there be than the loss of the goal of existence?

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४ ॥

But the man of disciplined mind, moving among the objects with senses free from desire and anger and controlled by himself, attains peace and clarity of soul

NOTES:

1. The *Yoga Sastras* describe these methods fully and clearly.

2. This and the succeeding 7 verses are an answer to Arjuna's question : किं व्रजेत । What will be the seer's attitude to the objects of the senses ?

3. Such मनःप्रसाद (mental equipoise and purity) alone leads to God-vision.

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ ६५ ॥

When such mental peace and purity are attained, the extinction of all sorrow is attained. The discriminative faculty of him whose mind has attained peace and purity is self-poised and steadfast.

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥

The knowledge of Atman comes not to him who has not attained mental equilibrium. To him who has not attained mental equilibrium comes not the uninterrupted meditation of the Self. To him who has not attained such meditation comes not the great peace of realisation.

To him who has not attained such peace, whence can come the bliss of Moksha?

NOTES

1 This verse shows the great truth that श्रवण, मनन, and निदिध्यासन lead to साक्षात्कार and मोक्षानन्द

2 Only the pure in heart shall see God—that is the substance of the Lord's teaching here

3 सुख means happiness and not pleasure There could be no iota of joy while passion exists Sri Sankaracharya says इन्द्रियाणां विषयसेवातृष्णातो निवृत्तिर्या तत् सुखं न विषयविषया तृष्णा दुःखमेव हि सा न तृष्णायां सत्यां सुखस्य गन्धमात्रमप्युपपद्यते इत्यर्थः । The turning back of the senses from the seeking of objects is joy The desire for objects is not joy but pain

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥ ६७ ॥

The mind which follows blindly in the wake of the roving senses carries away the faculty of discrimination as a storm carries away a boat upon the ocean

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ॥
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६८ ॥

Therefore, O mighty-armed, the wisdom of that man is steadfast, all of whose senses are restrained from all their objects.

NOTES.

1. Even if one sense is indulged, the succession of disasters already described will follow.

2. By calling Arjuna "mighty-armed" the Lord invites him to his self-conquest also.

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः॥

In the time which is night to all beings, the self-controlled man is awake. The time wherein all beings are awake is the time of sleep for the sage of true vision.

NOTES:

1. The Lord contrasts here in felicitous terms the knower and the ignorant man. The night of the ignorant is wisdom because they see nothing in it In such a night of wisdom the sage is awake. The day of the ignorant is that dense darkness of *avidya* where like owls the ignorant keep up a fitful activity. In relation to such dense darkness the attitude of the sage full of the light of god-realisation is the attitude of one to the

darkness of night—a feeling of dissatisfaction and a desire to turn away from it

2 The meaning may also be put tersely thus—God is like dark night to us but the sage sees Him and enjoys Him like day The world is like day to us but the sage moves in it as in a dark night

3 The Scripture declares

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्त ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।
बुद्धिश्च निर्विचेष्टेत तामाहु परमा गतिम् ॥

4 Sri Sankara says well that in the presence of jnana, avidya disappears विद्यायां हि सत्यामुदिते सवितरि शार्वरमिव तम प्रणाशमुपगच्छत्यविद्या ।

5 The Vartikakara says

कारकव्यवहारे हि शुद्ध वस्तु न वाक्ष्यते ।
शुद्ध वस्तुनि सिद्ध च कारकव्यापृतिस्तथा ॥

काकोलूकनिशेवाय संसाराऽज्ञात्मवेदिनो ।
या निशा सर्वभूतानामित्यवोचत्स्वय हरि ॥

6 The realisation of the unity of everything is thus described by the Scripture यत्र वा अन्यदिव स्यात्तत्रान्योऽन्यत्पश्येत् यत्र त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तत्केन क पश्येत् ।

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमाप प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।

तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥ ७० ॥

He attaineth Peace into whom all desires enter as the water enters the ocean which is ever being filled and is yet ever steadfast and unagitated—not he who is a desirer of desires

NOTES

1 The rivers entering the ocean lose the various specific characteristics of their waters and are assimilated to the ocean *Nâma* and *Rupa* disappear Even so the sense-enjoyments entering the mind of the man of realisation become transformed into the ineffable peace of Brahmânanda

2 चित्तमेव हि संसारस्तत्प्रयत्नेन शोधयेत् Hence the mind has to be purified to win god

3 The mind is either impure or pure The former binds us and the latter frees us

मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं शुद्धं चाशुद्धमेव च ।
अशुद्धं कामसंकल्पं शुद्धं कामविवर्जितम् ॥

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।
बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥

He who gives up all desires and lives in dispassion, without selfishness and egotism attaineth peace.

NOTES

1 शान्ति—Moksha सर्वससारदु खे परमत्वलक्षणा (Sri Sankara)

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थिति पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्म निर्वाणमृच्छति ॥

This is the Brahmic state, O Partha, on attaining which illusion ceases and by being steadfast in which, even at the close of his life, a man attains the bliss of God-realisation

NOTES

1 Sri Ramanuja says well निर्वाणमय ब्रह्म गच्छति । सुखैकतानमात्मानमाप्नोतीत्यर्थ । (Attain the bliss of the Atman)

2 Parikshit attained such bliss and Khatvanga also attained the bliss of realisation of God at the end of their lives as stated in the Bhagavata

विज्ञाय चरमावस्थां देवताभ्यो नृपोत्तमः ।
खट्वाङ्गो नाम राजर्षिर्मुहूर्ते मुक्तिमयिवान् ॥

Thus ends the Chapter SANKHYA YOGA

CHAPTER III

Karma Yoga.

अर्जुन उवाच—

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।
तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मा नियोजयसि केशव ॥ १ ॥

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।
तदेक वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ २ ॥

If O Janardana, Buddhi (Jnana or wisdom) is regarded by thee as superior to Karma (action) why, O Kesava, dost thou order me to do this cruel work? With speech which seems to be confused and perplexing you seem to bewilder my mind Therefore tell me with certainty that one thing, by which I can reach the highest good

NOTES

1 The Lord had closed Chapter II with the praise of the Brahmisthiti which is the consummation of the Sankhyayoga In the earlier portions of Chapter II He had praised the Karmayoga also Arjuna wants to have a clear idea of the inter-

connection and graduatedness of these two holy and auspicious paths

2 The Gita is a *Samvada* wherein by means of a dialogue truth is brought home to the hearer's mind It is a more natural and effective method than mere exposition or dialectics

3 Sri Sankaracharya shows that the opening portion of this Chapter shows the diverseness of Jnana and Karma and the certainty of Jnana being the sole means of self realisation If Jnana and Karma are equally nec ssary, would Arjuna, who is a pure and qualified disciple, regard them as separate and disconnected ? Would the Lord reply in the same strain treating them so ? Moksha is not a result of action It is a realisation मोक्षस्य चाकार्यत्वान्मुमुक्षोः कर्मानर्थक्यम् । The mere non doing which is a negative thing cannot produce a positive result Sastra is ज्ञापक (reminding agency) and not कारक (an agency enjoining action) Hence Karma and Jnana have reference to workers on two different planes (भिन्नपुरुषानिष्ठत्व)

4 The steps in the golden ladder of self realisation are thus beautifully described by Sri Madhusoodana एवं तावत्प्रथमेनाध्यायेन उपोद्घातितो द्वितीयेनाध्यायेन कृत्स्नः शास्त्रार्थः सूत्रितः । तथा हि आदौ निष्कामकर्मनिष्ठा ततो-

ऽन्तःकरणशुद्धिः ततः शमदमादिसाधनपुरःसरः सर्वकर्मसन्यासः ततो वेदान्तवाक्यविचारसहिता भगवद्भक्तिनिष्ठा ततस्तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठा तस्या फलं च त्रिगुणात्मकाविद्यानिवृत्त्या जीवन्मुक्तिः प्रारब्धकर्मफलभोगपर्यन्तं तदन्ते च विदेहमुक्तिः । जीवन्मुक्तिदशायां च परमपुरुषार्थावलम्बनेन परवैराग्यप्राप्तिः दैवसम्पदाख्या च शुभवासना तदुपकारिण्यादेया । आसुरसम्पदाख्या तु अशुभवासना तद्विरोधिनी हेया । दैवसम्पदोऽसाधारणं कारणं सात्त्विकी श्रद्धा आसुरसम्पदस्तु राजसी तामसी चेति हेयोपादेयविभागेन कृत्स्नशास्त्रार्थपरिसमाप्तिः ।

5 Thus Madhusoodana points out that the entire Sastra is stated in a nutshell in Chapter II Nishkâma Karma is dealt with in detail in Chapter III and IV. In Chapters V and VI is described Sarva Karma Sanyasa due to the pure mind perfected by *sama*, *dama*, *etc* Thus in Chapters I to VI त्वं पदार्थ (the soul) is clearly described to us तत्पदार्थ (God) is described in Chapters VII to XII In Chapter XIII the identity of तत् and त्वं (God and soul) is shown In Chapter XIV we are taught त्रैगुण्यविवृत्तिः In Chapter XV Daivi Sampat which is the supreme guide of परवैराग्य is shown In Chapter XVI and XVII the Sattviki Sraddha leading to दैवी सम्पत् and its opposite are described Thus in Chapters XIII to XVII we are taught सफला ज्ञाननिष्ठा In Chapter XVIII we have the उपसंहार the conclusion and summation of the teachings of the Gita

6 Sri Ramanuja says that the knowledge of the soul is a means to Bhakti and that Chapters II to VI describe the realisation of the soul as a means to Bhakti

7 Professor Rangachariar's interpretation of *Buddhi* as the disposition of the mind is quite against the trend of the teachings in Chapter II Arjuna regards the choice as a choice between *Karma marga* and *Jnana marga* and not as one between action and motive

8 Sri Madhwacharya says that the action regarded as lower than Jnana is only mercenary action (काम्यकर्म) The discussions bearing on this in Mr Padmanabhacharyar's book on the Gita show more subtlety than truth All are agreed that liberation is through wisdom and that Karma is a means to wisdom Hence Karma without love of fruit is higher than Karma with love of fruit but is lower than wisdom, because each higher plane is necessarily above each lower plane

9 Professor Rangachariar's translation of (निश्चित्य) or "after ascertaining well" does not seem to be quite correct as it could imply a doubt in Arjuna's mind about Sri Krishna's knowing the truth well

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन साङ्ख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥ ३ ॥

The Blessed Lord said

In the beginning (of creation), O sinless one, the twofold path was taught by me in this world—the path of wisdom for the Sankhyas and the path of Karma Yoga for the Yogins

NOTES

1 The Lord here shows the distinction of path (मार्ग) according to the distinction of Adhikari Sri Venkatanatha says in his Brahmanandagiri ज मान्तरसुकृतवशात्स्वत शुद्धान्त करणस्य साक्षाज्ज्ञान एव स्थिति । अतथाभूतस्य तु चित्तशुद्धिपर्यन्त ज्ञानाङ्गे कर्मणि स्थितिरिति ।

2 Sri Madhwacharya instances Sanaka and Janaka as instances of the ज्ञानयोगि and कर्मयोगि respectively द्विविधा अपि जना सन्ति । गृहस्थादि कर्मत्यागेन ज्ञाननिष्ठा सनकादयद । तत्स्था एव ज्ञाननिष्ठाश्च जनकादिवत् । मद्भक्ताश्च एवतय ।

3 There is no inconsistency in these views A person becomes fit for ज्ञान only through karma

Among those who are full of Jnana, some are like Sanaka and some like Janaka

4 Sri Ramanujacharya says well न हि सर्वो लौकिकः पुरुषः सञ्जातमोक्षाभिलाषः तदानीमेव ज्ञानयोगाधिकारे प्रभवति । अपि त्वनभिसंहितफलेन केवलपरमपुरुषाराधनवेषेणानुष्ठितेन कर्मणा विध्वस्तस्वान्तमलोऽव्याकुलेन्द्रियो ज्ञाननिष्ठायामधिकरोति ।

5 The absolute need for purification through Karma is thus strongly laid down in the following verses

अनधीत्य खिलान्वेदाननिष्ट्वाखिलान्सुरान् ।
अनुत्पाद्य सुतान्विप्रो न संन्यासितुमर्हति ॥

अकुर्वन्विहितं कर्म निन्दितं च समाचरन् ।
प्रचरन्निन्द्रियार्थेषु नरः पतनमृच्छति ॥

It is said further

परं ब्रह्म परिज्ञाय प्रव्रजेद्ब्राह्मणोत्तमः ।
अन्यथा कर्म कुर्वीत न प्रमाद्येत कर्हिचित् ॥

स्वे स्वेऽधिकारे या निष्ठा स गुणः परिकीर्तितः ।
विपरीतस्तु दोषः स्यादुभयोरेव निश्चयः ॥

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥

Man does not enjoy self-poised freedom from action by abstention from action nor does

he attain the realisation of wisdom by mere cessation from action

NOTES

1 The Lord answers an unexpressed question by Arjuna as to why if the two paths—of work and of wisdom—are to be followed by men of two different types of attainment he should be directed to follow the path of action

2 The nexus of tendencies and results known as Karma has to be unwound and cast off by the processes of selfless duty devotion concentration and wisdom and cannot be overcome by mere quiescence and quietism Mere quietism may bring about a state of inactivity of the senses but the impurity and sinfulness of the mind will increase by morbid thought about sense contacts and sense pleasures It is not work that binds but it is motived work that binds The *Isavasyopanishad* says

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

3 It has been well said

ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते पुंसां क्षयात्पापस्य कर्मणः ।
यथादर्शतलप्रख्ये पश्यत्यात्मानमात्मनि ॥
अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो दत्वा नैष्कर्म्यमाचरेत् ।

4 Sri Ramanuja says thus in a beautiful sentence about this truth अनभिसंहितफलेन कर्मणा निरस्तानादिकालप्रवृत्तानन्तपापसञ्चयैरव्याकुलेन्द्रियतापूर्विकात्मनिष्ठा दुःसम्पादा।

The same idea is tersely stated by Sri Sankara thus कर्मारम्भस्यैव नैष्कर्म्योपायत्वात्।

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत्।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ५ ॥

Verily no one can for even a moment rest without doing any action For every one is driven to action irresistibly by the *Gunas* (qualities) inherent in Prakriti

NOTES

1 The Prakriti Gunas drive us to action Hence to attain self poise and bliss by cessation from action is useless for the cause *ie* Prakriti Gunas remain unsubdued We must overcome the cause to subdue the effect

2 Sri Ramanuja points out that by past Karmas the sattvic rajasic and tamasic element in us have been fed and are in full and vigorous operation and cannot be overcome by inaction but only by Dharmic Karma

प्रकृतिसम्भवैः सत्त्वरजस्तमोभिः प्राचीनकर्मानुगुणप्रवृद्धैः गुणैः।

3 If mere inaction can procure salvation then trees would be liberated souls Sri Madhwa says well यदि कर्माकरणेन मुक्ति स्यात् स्थावराणाम्

4 God-realisation leads to liberation and it cannot come till *Karma* is vanquished by Dharma

अतोऽविस्वा पर देव माक्षाशा का महामुने ।
निष्काम ज्ञानपूर्वं तु निवृत्तमिति चोच्यते ।
निवृत्त सेवमानस्तु ब्रह्माभ्यति सनातनम् ॥

The Bhagavata says

कर्मभि शुद्धसत्त्वस्य वैराग्य जायत हृदि ।

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि सयम्य य आस्त मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचार: स उच्यते ॥ ६ ॥

He who restraining well the organs of action sits contemplating in his mind the objects of the senses is of deluded understanding and is called a hypocrite

NOTES

1 The idea is well stated by Sri Venkata natha thus अतास्वतत्त्वभाव कवलकर्मेन्द्रियनिग्रहमात्रस्यान थकरत्वात तद्रूप सन्यास ।

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
कर्मेन्द्रियै कर्मयोगमसक्त स विशिष्यते ॥ ७ ॥

But O Arjuna! he who, controlling the senses by the mind, begins and performs karma yoga by the organs of action in a spirit of non attachment excels (the impostor described above)

NOTES

1 The man who desires to dwell in an upper storey must build the basement and the first floor Even so must the man yearning for the self poise and bliss of Moksha do Nishkama karma

नियत कुरु कर्म त्व कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मण ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मण ॥ ८ ॥

Perform thou the obligatory duties because action is superior to inaction If thou art in active even the preservation of thy body could not be achieved

NOTES

1 The Hindu view is that the body should be preserved in full vitality because it is through karma that the soul mounts up devotion and wisdom which lead to self liberation and self realisation Sri Ramanuja says well यावत्साधनसमाप्ति शरीरधारण चावश्य कार्यम् ।

2 If work causes bondage higher and purer

work removes the bondage, as one thorn removes another and both are thrown away

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ ९ ॥

The world is in the bondage of action which is other than action done for the sake of the lord Therefore, O Kaunteya, do work for His sake and without attachment

NOTES

1 यज्ञ means The Lord here It means also sacrifice Sri Ramanuja says that only wealth got for Dharmic actions saves us through the Lord's grace यज्ञादिभिः कर्मभिराराधित परमपुरुषोऽस्यानादिकालप्रवृत्त-तद्वासनामुच्छिद्य अव्याकुलात्मविलोकनं ददातीत्यर्थः ।

2 It has been well said also that right action is that which does not bind us तत्कर्म यन्न बन्धाय It is also said कर्मणा बध्यते जन्तुः Motived action holds us in the bondage of tendencies and results

3 In sacrifice and worship, there is the predominant element of self denial This self-denial blossoms into self realisation

4 The Sruti says in a great passage तमेतं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसानाशकेन ।

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ १० ॥

Having created mankind along with sacrifices the Creator said at the beginning (of creation) to them "By this shall ye grow This shall be to you the fulfiller of all desires"

NOTES

1 Some of the commentators point out that this is an *Arthavada* to make us realise the duty and blessedness of unselfish action In the case of an *Arthavada* the emphasis is on the governing idea rather than on the form or the accessories A familiar example is काश्यां तु मरणान्मुक्तिः (Dying in Benares gives us liberation) Arthavadas deal with praise and dispraise of acts and omissions and gives us illustrative stories and traditions स्तुतिनिन्दापरकृति पुराकल्प इत्यर्थवाद (Gautama Sutras)

2 Sri Sankara points out that this episode is introduced to make us realise the indispensableness of a life of unselfish action. Sri Ramanuja says that it is introduced to emphasise the difference between the results of the conduct of life on the basis of accepting as our food what remains after sacrificial offering and on the opposite basis

3. Professor Rangachariar tries to bring into his exposition the conclusions of the faithful student of our religion and the faithful student of comparative religion The faithful student of our religion is a devotee whose clarity of vision is the result of his faith The student of comparative religion is like a pedagogue asking each religion in the world to stand up and deliver an account of itself While a pedagogue deals with living boys, the student of comparative religion deals with mummies and living boys in the shape of dead and living religions and has a special fondness for the former The two methods of treatment are best kept apart Sri Krishna emphasises the supreme need of sacrifice as a purifier and uplifter of the soul We cannot allow His doctrine to be weakened by references to any tentative conclusions propounded by the bumptious pedagogue of comparative religion

4. What is यज्ञ? Some take it in the larger sense of unselfish action in general and others take it in the narrower sense of sacrifices Here the latter meaning is the more appropriate having regard to the text and the context Our religion emphasises the need for a moral and unselfish life of service to man even more than other religions But that is the matter for exposition elsewhere

Here the Lord deals with the question of offerings to the Devas Unselfish service to man no doubt pleases them But in the case of the Gods who give everything to us what can we give and what do we give to them? In the case of our relations and friends who give a little to us, we owe a deep debt of gratitude and seek to repay it by service and love In the case of the Gods who give us everything—nay, sustain life for us even when we are in deep sleep—what can we give? Scripture which alone declares beyond doubt their existence and nature tells us how to please them We can only give them a fraction of what they have provided in plenty for us It is not the giving that is of importance as much as the spirit of the giving What is given to them as a sacrificial love-offering is again given to us by them with renewed and increased sustaining purifying, and uplifting power Food eaten by us without being offered to them will be as much subject to the processes of digestion and assimilation as the food offered to them But in the former case our appropriation of what they give is hardly a decent act worthy of self respecting beings In the latter case our sacrificial act declares and proves our gratitude and is sure to result in the sacrificial love offering

coming back to us with added fruitfulness and blessedness As Prahlada says beautifully:

> नैवात्मनः प्रभुरयं निजलाभपूर्णः
> मानं जनादविदुषः करुणो वृणीते ।
> यद्यज्जनो भगवते विदधीत मानं
> तच्चात्मने प्रतिमुखस्य यथा मुखश्रीः ॥

5 But are there such gods or divine agencies in nature? The final and incontrovertible evidence about their existence is in Scripture. शास्त्रयोनित्वात्. From the standpoint of reason we can well see that in the case of human phenomena will is the cause of design, order, symmetry, etc In nature we see design, order etc. What right have you to say that there is no operation of will there? What right have you to ascribe them to chance or to unintelligent nature? Have you seen in the world of human phenomena anything to justify your ascription of such a cause to the natural phenomena? Again, will and radiance and energy co-exist in the case of the kingdom of man. You find intenser radiance and power in the world of nature. On what basis do you deny the co-existence of will and intelligence in relation to them? On the other hand if the function of logic is to proceed from the known to the un-known, you should ascribe such higher and intenser radiance and energy to higher

and intenser will and intelligence You say that the gods should manifest themselves before your vision Are they school boys to obey the call of you their pedagogue? In the case of the lower energies of nature you are willing to take the intermediate steps required for the direct perception of such energies If you want to make electricity to light your room you do not issue a verbal command to it to do so You generate it, you store it, and then you apply the proper switch Should you not take the proper steps required for the realisation and perception of the higher energies of life? *Mantras* and *Japas* and meditation and devotion are the means for the realisation and perception of the divine spiritual energies of life Emotion and intuition and the ethical sense are certainly at least as valuable elements of us as reason and their affirmations should not be ignored

6 The divine agencies in the universe preside over nature s energies and over the even more wonderful energies of the senses and are great *bhaktas* who are *adhikarikas* or powers entrusted with certain special tasks of guidance and control by the command of the supreme Isvara Remember the life of Dhruva MaxMuller's view that

we have transferred to natural phenomena the principle of l fe in us by an illogical shifting of centre is absurd Our view is not that sages were children playing with the facts of life as dolls In respect of the facts of nature and the functions of life science merely gives a long name and a longer description and calls these an explanation of their cause We say that the divine agencies are the causes and that the phys cal predecessors of effects are only preliminary effects of other causes though science dignifies these as causes Suppose a man looses his sight through small pox You say that small pox is the cause of the loss of vision I say that the sun who is inspirer and illuminer of the power of vision has withdrawn his *an graha* grace owing to our sin and the first effect is small pox and the second effect is blindness Max Muller s *Ie otheis* theory is equally absurd as he seems to think that mankind ran in blinkers seeing only one thing at a time or that the Gods were made to come into the field of vision one after another by the gyrating mach nery of a spiritual bioscope Our Vedas tell us एक सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति The sages call each god the Supreme Isvara If man could be divine why could not the deit es presiding over the d fferent energies of nature be realised as the Supreme Lord? Such

theories as these are only one step removed from blindness of vision when compared with such ridiculous theories as those propounded by Mr T Paramasiva Iyer about the Veda embodying geological facts e g that Gayatri is marsh gas etc

7 Vaishnavas concentrate their gaze on the universal Lord who is the summation of all aspects of creative preservative and destructive power Smarthas devote their love and attention to Him as well as the various aspects above said which are the various gods with scripture declared forms and powers There are some Vaishnavas who are devotees of these as well

8 There is a certain significance in the offering of food to the Gods The beauty of the golden corn is lost upon us like the beauty of the sun as familiarity breeds contempt The sweetest thing in life is food Indeed we express other needs by the terms hunger, appetite etc if there is any divine element in life it must attach to what is the main bulk of life s action by eating and marriage leading to self preservation and race preservation If one is asked to choose between going without food for three days and going without votes for three months there would not be a moment s hesitation about the choice Food

is taken to sustain life The sense of taste acts as the doorkeeper allowing healthful things alone to go in So far as the primary need of life is concerned if we can have an external selective agency the sense of taste might as well be abolished If food be taken for mere enjoyment, we should always keep it on the tongue We should surrender to the gods what we hold dearest because such an act brings about a threefold blessing it generates in us habits of detachment, dispassion, and un selfishness, it pleases the gods who give us in abundance the things that sustain, delight and purify life, and what is offered comes back to us with an added power of gracious blessing Is it anything wonderful that we should have a sacramental conception of food ? Indeed any other conception of it would be ungrateful or hardly even decent Food should be pure, prepared by pure hands free from impurity of environments, warm and rendered even purer by *mantras* It should then be offered to God and then partaken by us

9. Thus it is through sacrifices that we learn our first lessons in the finest art of life—the art of unselfish and active and dispassionate blessedness Sacrifice for blessings here and hereafter eventually leads us to work in a spirit of detachment and as a love-offering to God The spiral of ascent is like this

Sacrifice teaches us dependence on a higher power and lessens our ravenous sense of proprietorship यज्ञ is देवतोद्देशेन द्रव्यत्याग (Giving up wealth for the sake of God) The emotion of gratitude soon ripens into the higher emotion of love The emotion of brotherhood is generated and intensified by sharing with our fellow worshippers the food offered to God Slowly the energies of dispassion and detachment and love fructify in us till the true spirit of Karma Yoga—सर्वं कृष्णार्पणमस्तु—is realised by us and this leads us to the supreme heights of God Love and God realisation (*Bhakti and Jnana*) Hence the highest peaks of the inner life really rest on the solid ground of a proper scheme of life as work and sacrifice

10 सहयज्ञैः is another reading for सहयज्ञाः Both the readings mean the same thing The former means that mankind and sacrifice were created simultaneously and the latter suggests that they were indissolubly bound one to the other Sacrifice is the means to attainment The good things of life come of their own accord though the sacrificer has his eye on God and not on them just as though a man plants a mango tope for fruits, he gets fragrance and shade as well Even if they do not come there is the supreme blessedness of loyalty to Dharma As Apastamba says

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functions Sacrifice is the means of their propitiation and will lead us into the realms of bounteous blessedness

2 Sri Ramanujacharya says that the Supreme God accepts all offerings and every worship अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।

3 Sri Sankaracharya says that श्रेय पर means Moksha through Jnana which results from Nishkamakarma or merely *Svarga* (heaven) That heaven exists is clear because such enjoyments as unfading youth and unfading flowers (अम्लानपुष्पाणि) do not exist on earth

4 Raghavendra Swami treats the command as applicable to the lower gods and to men to fulfil duties and thereby to attain the bliss of God realisation

5 The relation between sacrifice and prosperity is thus stated

अग्नौ प्रास्ताहुति सम्यगादित्यमुपतिष्ठति ।
आदित्याज्जायते वृष्टिर्वृष्टेरन्न तत प्रजा ॥

6 Kalidasa says well in *Raghuvamsa* दुदोह गां स यज्ञाय सस्याय मघवा दिवम् । सम्पद्विनिमयेनोभौ दधतुर्भुवनद्वयम् ॥

इष्टा-भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव स. ॥ १२ ॥

तद्यथाम्र फलार्थे निर्मित छाया गन्ध इत्यनूपद्यत एव धर्मं चर्यमाण तथा अनूत्पद्य त नाः चदनूत्पद्यन्ते न हानिर्भवति ॥

11 Sri Ramanujacharya well points out that at the beginning of creation God gave sacrifice to the human soul as the chart of life so that the soul may be freed from its accumulated load of karma

पुरा सर्गकाल स भगवान् प्रजापति अनादिकालप्रवृत्ताचित्संसर्ग विवशा उपसंहृतनामरूपविभागा स्वस्मि प्रलीना सकलपुरुषार्थानर्हाश्चेतरकल्पा प्रजा समीक्ष्य परमकारुणिकस्तदुज्जीवायपया स्वाराधनभूत यज्ञनिवृत्तये यज्ञै सह ता सृष्ट्वैवमुवाच ॥

12 इष्टकाम—includes also Moksha Actions and sacrifices done in a spirit of love of results brings such results If done in a spirit of detachment and as a love offering to God they bring to us the result of Moksha through *chittasuddhi* and *bhakti a l j ana*

देवान्भावयतानेन त देवा भावयन्तु व ।
परस्पर भावयन्त श्रेय परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११ ॥

Nourish and gladden the *Devas* (gods) with this, and may they nourish and gladden you Thus nourishing and gladdening one other, you shall attain the highest good

NOTES

1 The gods govern and guide the cosmic

of food The illogical modern man is glad when he is told that the human body is the temple of God but demurs to the sacramental conception of food which builds up the body The divine pity of the lord for man is seen in His giving us in the Gita not merely the ultimate truths of the spirit but also the holy means of God-realisation including the elementary but all important means of purity of food

2 *Vaisvadeva* is believed to remove the पञ्चसूना दोषा (the evils inevitably attendant on cooking processes)

कण्डणी पेषणी चुल्ली उदकुम्भी च मार्जनी ।
पञ्चसूना गृहस्थस्य ताभि स्वर्गं न विन्दति ॥

पञ्चसूना कृत दोष पञ्चयज्ञैर्व्यपोहति ॥

3 The following passages in Scripture may also be remembered in this connection इदमेवास्य तत्साधारणमन्न यदिदमद्यते स य एतदुपास्ते न स पाप्मनो व्यावर्तते मिश्र ह्येतत् ।

मोघमन्न विन्दते अप्रचेता सत्य ब्रवीमि वध इस तस्य ।
नार्यमण पुष्यति नो सखाय केवलाघो भवति केवलादी ॥

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसंभव ।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥ १४ ॥

The deities thus nourished and gladdened by sacrifice will give you all desired enjoyments He who enjoys what is given by them without offering the same to them is verily a thief

NOTES

1 Selfish enjoyment of wealth is both anti social and irreligious and has further a corrupting effect on individual purity and goodness From the social point of view wealth is a trust for society From the religious point of view it is a blessing from above It should be offered to God and then enjoyed as his grace and it is a trust in our hands for his other children also

2 स्तेन is interpreted by Sri Sankara as देवादिस्वापहारी (who purloins the property of the gods and does not take the same as a free and glad gift)

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।
भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ १३ ॥

The righteous who eat the food remaining after offering as sacrifice are freed from all sins, but the sinful ones who cook for their own sakes are eating only sin

NOTES

1 Here we have a sacramental conception

4 Sri Ramanuja says that Brahma means body and *Akshara* means Jiva This would mean that actions are done by the ensouled body and that hence the body which is *Sarvagata* i e, a universal phenomenon depends on sacrifices for its being

5 Sri Madhwacharya interprets Brahma as God and Akshara as the Veda God proceeds from the Veda because He is revealed by it शास्त्रयोनित्वात् (Brahma Sutras I, 1, 3)

6 Sankarananda well says एवं वृष्टयन्नद्वारा जगज्जीवनहेतुर्यो यज्ञ ।

7 Sri Venkatanatha says that the infinite variety of fruits in the universe is due to the variety of actions and motives, God being the uniform and impartial agent assigning fruits to actions, like the rain that enables each seed to sprout according to its nature

8 Veda is called सर्वगत, it illumines everything and embraces the entire cosmic life

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥ १६ ॥

He who doth not follow in this world the cosmic wheel thus set in motion, who liveth in

Notes

1 The Lord gives here an additional reason to do Karma Man should do it not only because of God's commandment at the beginning of creation but also because only in that way can he aid the cosmic life and fulfil himself The verses describe the cosmic wheel (जगच्चक्र) that rolls on from dissolution to dissolution

2 Nature and nature's divine agencies will give us the maximum of knowledge and power and happiness only when we seek knowledge and power and bliss in a spirit of unselfishness and purity Else we fall and even drag others down in our fall

3 *Karma* produces *apurva* (the potency of fruitage) which brings on results when the God appointed time comes

2 Only the seers who have risen to the heights of meditation communion and realisation can attain to this height The Lord ever and anon even in this discourse about Karma presents to the mind of the disciple the vision of the perfect ideal

3 मानव —is used to indicate the man of thought and realisation and may include gods also

4 रति तृप्ति सन्तोष—refer to three kinds of mental states रति is in relation to garlands woman, etc तृप्ति is in relation to food and drink सतोष is in relation to acquisitions like cows wealth children etc

5 The Sruti declares आत्मक्रीड आत्मरति क्रिया वानेष ब्रह्मविदा वरिष्ठ । It is said also आत्मरतिरात्मक्रीड आत्ममिथुन आत्मानन्द । आत्मलाभान्न पर विद्यत । एतद्वाग्त दृष्ट्वा तृप्यति ।

6 It is well stated in the following verse that he who has realised the fulness of bliss in God cares not for the minor pleasures पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्तु इहैव सर्वे प्रविलीयान्ति कामा ।

7 Sri Sankaracharya says in his Sutra Bhashya (I 1 4) अलकारा ह्यस्माक यद्ब्रह्मावगतौ सत्या सर्वैक तैष्यताहानि कृतकृत्यता च ।

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रय ॥ १८ ॥

sin, and who rejoiceth in the life of the senses,—he lives in vain, O Partha

NOTES

1 इन्द्रियाराम contrasted with धर्माराम and आत्माराम

2 Sri Madhusoodana refers in this connection to the Sruti अथो अयं वा आत्मा भूतानां लोकः स यज्जुहोति यद्यजते तेन देवानां लोकोऽथ यदनुब्रूते तेन ऋषीणामथ यत्पितृभ्यो निपृणाति यत्प्रजामिच्छति तेन पितॄणामथ यन्मनुष्यान्वासयते यदेभ्योऽशनं ददाति तेन मनुष्याणामथ यत्पशुभ्यस्तृणोदकं विन्दति तेन पशूनां यदस्य गृहेषु श्वापदा वयांस्यापिपीलिकाभ्य उपजीवन्ति तेन तेषां लोकः ।

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

But the man who finds bliss in the Self who is satisfied with the Self, and rejoices in the Self—for him there is not the obligatoriness of action

NOTES

1 Till now the Lord described in an episodic way the obligatoriness of action and the sinfulness of inaction But in the case of those who have risen through action to realisation the law of the obligatoriness of action ceases to be applicable

Vasishtha says further that these 7 stages correspond to the jagrat, svapna, and sushupti stages in point of intensity of perception and bliss

भूमिकात्रितय त्वेतद्राम जाग्रदिति स्थितम् ।
यथावद्भेदबुद्ध्येद जगज्जाग्रति दृश्यते ॥
अद्वैते स्थैर्यमायाते द्वैते प्रशममागते ।
पश्यन्ति स्वप्नवल्लोके चतुर्थी भूमिकामता ॥
पञ्चमी भूमिकामेत्य सुषुप्तिपदनामिकाम् ।
षष्ठीं गाढसुषुप्त्याख्यां क्रमात्पतति भूमिकाम् ॥
षष्ठ्या भूम्यामसौ स्थित्वा सप्तमीं भूमिमाप्नुयात् ।
किंचिदेवैष सपन्नस्त्वथवैष न किंचन ॥
विदेहमुक्तता तूक्ता सप्तमी योगभूमिका ।
अगम्या वचसा शान्ता सा सीमा योगभूमिषु ॥

3 Sri Bhagavata thus describes the seer full of God vision and God realisation as one who is in the state of such ecstacy of bliss that the comings and goings of fleeting pleasures and pains have no effect on him

देह च नश्वरमवस्थितमुत्थित वा
सिद्धो न पश्यति यतोऽध्यगमत्स्वरूपम् ।
दैवादुपेतमथ दैववशादपेत
वासो यथा परिकृत मदिरामदान्ध ॥

The Sruti declares

To him there is no selfish purpose to be attained through action Nor does he suffer any deprivation by desisting from action To him there is no dependence for any selfish purpose upon the whole realm of created being

NOTES

1 This verse, like the preceding one, describes the man of God vision and God realisation who has attained his exquisite bliss of Bhakti and jnana as the fulfilment and fruit of his life of Karma yoga and who is so lost in the rapture of realisation that the duties and joys of the lower realm of action have been included and transcended in a higher bliss just as the lamplight is lost and transcended in the full bright golden radiance of the noonday sun

2 Sri Madhusoodana describes here the seven *yoga bhoomis* which form the stages in the life of him who has become so pure in heart and steadfast in mind as to be fit to vision and realise and attain God The seven stages are stated thus in *Yoga Vasishta*

ज्ञानभूमिः शुभेच्छाख्या प्रथमा परिकीर्तिता ।
विचारणा द्वितीया स्यात्तृतीया तनुमानसा ॥

सत्त्वापत्तिश्चतुर्थी स्यात्ततोऽसंसक्तिनामिका ।
पदार्थाभावनी षष्ठी सप्तमी तुर्यगा स्मृता ॥

2 Only *Muktas* and *Jivanmuktas* are so lost in the ecstatic visioning of God that action has fallen off from them Others and even men of wisdom in moods of व्युत्थान (awareness of the world) must do their duties in life Sri Madhwacharya says well यतोऽसम्प्रज्ञातसमाधेरेव कार्याभाव तस्मात्कर्म समाचर ।

3 Sri Ramanujacharya interprets पर as meaning the jivatma This means that the person pursuing the path of Nishkama Karma will realise the true nature of the soul and that then through Bhakti the bliss of God realisation will result

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ २० ॥

Janaka and others have indeed attained perfection through action alone, and even from the point of view of the welfare of the world by not swerving from the path of righteousness, thou shouldst perform action

NOTES

1 The various stories about Janaka's life show how he was an ideal *Karmayogi*

2 The combination of work and unselfishness is difficult and the elimination of selfish motive

तद्यथाऽहिनिर्ल्वयनी वल्मीक मृता प्रत्यस्ता शयीतैवमेवेद शरीर शेतेऽथायमशरीरा मृत प्राणा ब्रह्मैव तेज एव ।

4 As among the seven planes of yogic realisation above said it is said that the first three are the means that the fourth is the state of wisdom, and that the last three are the stages of jivanmukti

चतुर्थी भूमिका ज्ञान तिस्र स्यु साधन पुरा ।
जीवन्मुक्तेरवस्थास्तु परास्तिस्र प्रकीर्तिता ॥

5 Sri Madhwa quotes the following beautiful line विष्णावव रतिर्यस्य क्रिया तस्यैव नास्ति हि ।

6 It is well said

ज्ञानामृतेन तृप्तस्य कृतकृत्यस्य योगिन ।
नैवास्ति किंचित्कर्तव्यमस्ति चेन्न स तत्त्ववित् ॥

तस्मादसक्तः सतत कार्यं कर्म समाचर।
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुष ॥ १९ ॥

Therefore do thou always perform without attachment the obligatory duties, for by performing action without attachment, man verily reaches the Supreme

NOTES

1 तस्मात Neelakantha says this means because unattached work is not a cause of bondage यस्मा नि ष्कामस्य कमलेपो नास्ति

2 Sri Ramanuja well says अन्यथा लोकनाशन जनित पाप ज्ञानयोगादप्येनमच्यावयेत् (The sin of misleading and ruining others will overthrow him from his Jnanayoga if his conduct is not all right and he does not take care about it in his fancied superiority as a *Jnanayogi*)

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्य त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्य वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ २२ ॥

In all the three worlds, O Partha, there is not for me any obligatory action that must be done nor is there anything unattained that has to be attained Yet I remain in action

NOTES

1 The Lord besides giving a large number of convincing reasons finally instances himself as the supreme example of a Karma Yogi

2 The Lord s work is His Leela It is due to the abundance of His Grace and for the betterment of humanity (लोकसंग्रह)

3 The Lord is not a *Baddha* or *mukta* (soul in bondage or liberated soul) He is the Paramatma who is अवाप्तसमस्तकाम, सत्यकाम, सत्यसंकल्प, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence and when yet out

from work has to be slowly attained by strenuous effort and God's grace

3 Such unselfish work removes the low pleasure of selfish enjoyment during success and the keen sting of disappointment during failure helps the progress of country and humanity, and leads us to that state of inner purity and peace which lead to the bliss of God love and God realisation

4 लोकसंग्रह—लोकस्योन्मार्गप्रवृत्तिनिवारणम् । (the preventing of Adharmic action by the world)

5 Janaka is specially mentioned because a King can best guide his people in the paths of righteousness by being righteous himself सर्वे राजाश्रिता धर्माः राजा धर्मस्य धारकः ।

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

Whatsoever a superior man does, that other men also do Whatsoever he acts on as authoritative, that is followed by the world at large

NOTES

1 The heroisms of self control and obedience to the Lord's commandments are necessary not only to the individual but also for the solidarity of society.

"Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong
And the most ancient heavens through thee
are fresh and strong"

2 The breach of duty leads to Dharma-sankara and Varna sankara and destroys the orderly upward evolution of life I have referred to this already in Chapter I and shall refer to it again in Chapter IV

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥ २५ ॥

Just as the unenlightened do work, O Bharata, in a spirit of attachment to action, so should the enlightened man do work without attachment and with a desire for the proper guidance and welfare of the world

NOTES

1 The difference is one of motive The heart is the seat of worldliness or Godliness according as we train it and purify it Blessed are the pure in spirit, for they shall see God

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥ २६ ॥

Let no learned man cause an unsettlement

of His Grace (अनुग्रह) comes into the world of men to uphold righteousness and draw the eyes and hearts of all to His lotus feet by His Beauty and His Love

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ २३ ॥

If I do not continue in action incessantly and without indolence men would in all respects and directions follow in that path of mine, O Partha

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

If I do not engage in action, these worlds would perish I should be the cause of confusion of births and I should thus ruin all these created beings

NOTES

1 Duty (Dharma) is what keeps the worlds in tune and leads souls to God Hence Iswara as the Lord of Duty is ever declaring it by words and conduct धर्मो विश्वस्य जगतः प्रतिष्ठा Wordsworth says of Duty

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जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥ २६ ॥

Let no learned man cause an unsettlement

of mind among those who have not become full of wisdom and who are yet attached to work He should cause all actions to be done, himself doing them in the proper spirit of *yoga*

NOTES

1 The Lord says that the truly wise man should induce all to do their duties slowly introducing the element of the higher motive which transforms the lead of work into the gold of love and bliss by himself doing duty in the proper spirit of unattached work for pleasing the Lord

2 It has been said

अज्ञस्यार्धप्रबुद्धस्य सर्वं ब्रह्मेति यो वदेत् ।
महानिरयजालेषु स तेन विनियोजितः ॥

3 Religious propagandism overthrowing of beliefs and unsettlement of minds are not God's work The truly divine work is effecting a conversion of the heart leaving the duties unaltered

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥ २७ ॥

He whose mind is clouded by egoism regards himself as the doer in respect of all actions which are done by the qualities of Prakriti

Notes

1 The Prakriti spoken of here is not the self-active and independent Prakriti of the Sâmkhyas but the Pârameswari sakti, which gives suitable embodiments to jivas as the result of actions and binds them or frees them in accordance with violation of, or obedience to, the Lord's commandments Such *sakti* is thus described in our sacred books

देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् ।
मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ॥

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥ २८ ॥

O mighty armed, he who knows the truth about the diversities of qualities and actions, realising that the senses which are natural qualities move amidst the objects which are also natural qualities is not attached

Notes

1 Such a clear discerner knows that the soul is not the principle of association with things but it is the mind which is in a state of relation to objects

2 Hence the soul is free and realised as free from all the infinite complexities of causes and

effects in nature Then Ahamkara (egoism) and Mamakara the acquisitive and possessive sense cease to hold sway over us

3 In a beautiful and telling passage the Scripture shows how the soul identifies itself with the mind and the senses and the object

अन्धा मणिमविन्दत् । तमनङ्गुलिरावयत् । अग्रीवः प्रत्यमुञ्चत् ।
तमजिह्वो असश्चत ।

4 Buddhi ahamkara the senses and the objects are all गुणविभागा The कर्मविभागा depend on them

5 Sri Madhusoodana takes गुणकर्मविभागशः as गुणकर्म on the one hand and विभाग which means Atman on the other The author of Bhashyotkarsha Deepika criticises this view Indeed he seldom omits an opportunity of attacking Madhusoodana

6 This stanza shows that in this universe of matter and energy the needs of the organism which are the effects of *gunas* and the cause of *karmas* are not connected with the soul which is *sachidananda*. The predominance of a particular *guna* determines our mental outlook and our consequent actions Hence man ought to take care of the work as well as the motive

प्रकृतेर्गुणसंमूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।
तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥२९॥

Those who are deluded by the qualities of Prakriti are attached to the actions done by the gunas. The man of perfect knowledge should not unsettle those men of imperfect knowledge and dull comprehension.

NOTES.

1. He should not, as already pointed out in my notes to verse 26, take away their attachment to work but should introduce slowly the transforming element of Nishkâmakarma that will lead through devotion and wisdom to liberation

2 कृत्स्न means "The All" *i e*, God This is well brought out by the following verses

सर्ववेत्त्रादिवाक्येभ्यः कृत्स्नं वस्तु यतोऽद्वयम् ।
सम्भवत्वाद्विरुद्धस्य कुतोऽकृत्स्नस्य वस्तुतः ॥
यस्मिन्दृष्टेऽप्यदृष्टोऽयं स तदन्यश्च शिष्यते ।
तथा दृष्टेऽपि दृष्टः स्यादकृत्स्नस्तादृगुच्यते ॥

The Sruti also says

आत्मनो वा अरे दर्शनेन श्रवणेन मत्या विज्ञानेनेदं सर्वं विदितम् ।
यस्मिन्विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवति ।

3 Sri Ramanujacharya expounds the truth contained in this verse in his own masterly way

ते किल मन्दाः श्रेष्ठजनाचारानुवर्तिनः कर्मयोगादुत्थितमेन दृष्ट्वा कर्मयोगात् प्रचलितमनसो भवेयुः। अतः श्रेष्ठः स्वयमपि कर्मयोगे तिष्ठन्नात्मयाथात्म्यज्ञानेन आत्मनोऽकर्तृत्वमनुसन्दधानः कर्मयोग एवात्मावलोकने निरपेक्षसाधनमिति दर्शयित्वा तानकृत्स्नविदो जोषयेत् ॥

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युद्ध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ ३० ॥

Do thy work of fighting, surrendering unto me all actions, with thy mind realising that thou art the servant of God, free from attachment to results and from a desire of selfish possession, and free from burning grief and anxiety.

NOTES

1 The realisation that God has His purposes achieved through us is one of the great liberators from sin and bondage We are His servants and we must do our duty as His servants He is the *Antaryamin* अन्तःप्रविष्टः शास्ता जनानां सर्वात्मा. See also Gita XVIII, 61 Our illusion of our being कर्ता will be overcome by this means This is consistent with the further realisation that the real agents in work are the mind, the senses, and the body, the soul being साक्षी (witness) and Sacchidananda A fur-

ther realisation is the realisation of its identity with Paramatma Much confusion of thought arises when we utter all these realisations without realising their interconnection and gradation The immediate agents in work are Prakriti Gunas, and the ultimate agent is God who is the lord of Prakriti So long as we are under the illusion of the soul being the doer and enjoyer and do not realise that the soul is *sakshi* and *sacchidanandda*, we are bound to the wheel of *samsara* The realisations abovesaid free us from such illusion The Lord is in no way affected by our actions because He is like rain bringing each seed unto fruition and fulfilment according to its true and essential nature

2 Only when we realise these truths, we will be inclined to surrender the fruits of actions to God and pray that He may scatter the blessed results of the actions broadcast over the world for the joy of mankind The torture of the selfish prayer of individual happiness will leave us only then The mere intellectual assent to the doctrine that the Prakriti gunas are the real agents in work is of no use Our illusion is too strong to be destroyed by a mere intellectual assent The doing of duties irrespective of consequences and by way of carrying out His commandments to win His grace

slowly generates our intense realisation of our true nature The conquest of illusion is only by such means and by none other To such a soul full of *sraddha* and striving God gives the bliss of realisation If you rely on God and realise that He is the real agent in human actions His grace will give the fullness of *jnana* The importance of such faith is taught in the following verses

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥

Those men who follow this teaching of mine ceaselessly, full of faith and free from cavil, they also are freed from the bondage of actions

NOTES

1 Three grades of Godwardness are indicated here Follow His teachings at least have faith in any event do not cavil These persons though below the jnanayogi are all wending Godward

2 Such is the importance of *sraddha* or faith The Lord emphasises this in Chapter IV verses 39—40

3 The Agneya Purana says —

श्रुतिमात्ररसाः सूक्ष्माः प्रधानपुरुषेश्वराः ।
श्रद्धामात्रेण गृह्यन्ते न करेण न चक्षुषा ॥
श्रद्धा धर्मः परः सूक्ष्मः श्रद्धा ज्ञानं हुतं तपः ।
श्रद्धा स्वर्गश्च मोक्षश्च श्रद्धा सर्वमिदं जगत् ॥

4. What is *sraddha*? शास्त्राचार्योपदिष्टेऽर्थेऽननुभूतेऽप्येवमेवैतदिति विश्वासः [Madhusoodana]. It is faith that what is taught by scripture and teacher is true.

5. Quite opposed to it is Asuya (असूया). It is गुणेषु दोषाविष्करणं (saying 'that good qualities are really defects, trying to prove that what acts are pronounced to be auspicious are causes of our undoing, denying the truth of virtues, etc.) Hiranyakasipu was the worst of cavillers and sceptics and athiests. So was Sisupala. Such souls cannot rise to the Supreme.

6. Faith is not opposed to reason. Reason belongs to the world of the senses. Faith is the instrument of realisation and the organ of truth in the super-sensuous world. That the mind and the senses are the real agents is *clear to us from reason* (*Samkhya*). That God is the ultimate agent is the *declaration of faith*. That God and soul are one in bliss is the *realisation*.

7. *Asuya* is also described as परोत्कर्षासहिष्णुत्वं (inability to put up with the superiority of another)

If one will not accept the glory and power of God but cavils at him and disobeys His laws, there is no hope for him

8 The faith that leads to hatred of other religions or men is not faith, it is *ahamkara* Pure faith increases our love of God and man and always takes us nearer to God realisation

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।
सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ ३२ ॥

But those who, being given to carping and decrying, do not follow this teaching of mine—know them to be men of diverse ignorance in respect of all forms of wisdom, lost men, and men of lost mind

NOTES

1 This terrible indictment is quite legitimate because if after such revelation from such divine lips we are full of doubt or despair or dislike we are indeed lost souls

2 The moods of agnosticism and athiesm bar the door to self realisation and God realisation

3 Reason is the revealer, and faith the impeller The army of low impulses and desires has

to be overthrown by the sword of faith and not by the lamp of reason

4 Neelakantha says that सर्वं means God Chapter XI of the Gita says सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वं । Madhusoodana says that अचेतस relates to the sum total of knowledge relating to Karma and Brahma and Saguna and Nirguna He points out also the process of decline *i.e.*, अचेतस सर्वज्ञानविमूढान् and नष्टान् (*i.e.*, with unillumined minds deluded as to all truth and lost) The Lord states later on in the Gita.

तानहं द्विषत क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभान्यासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥
आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥

5 Sankarananda says that the Lord condemns those who give up action and are unfit for renunciation कर्म बहुसाधनसाध्यं क्लेशभूयिष्ठं अदृष्टफलं चात स्तत्संन्यास एव परमसुखमित्येवं विपरीतबुद्धयस्तान् स यागानदानकर्म-निष्ठान् जनान्नष्टान् विनष्टपुण्यलोकान्विद्धि ॥

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रह किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

Even the man of knowledge acts in accor

If one will not accept the glory and power of God but cavils at him and disobeys His laws, there is no hope for him

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सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

Even the man of knowledge acts in accor-

dance with his own nature All beings follow nature What can restraint avail ?

Notes

1 This is in answer to Arjuna's assumed question as to why if following the Lord's teaching confers such blessings all persons do not follow it

2 प्रकृतिः—is that portion of the sum total of of our good and evil acts and tendencies which attain fruition and expression in this life Sri Sankaracharya says — पूर्वकृतधर्माधर्मादिसंस्कारो वर्तमानजन्मादिव्यक्त सा प्रकृति Sri Ramanujacharya says that प्रकृति means प्राचीनवासना Sri Madhwacharya says that it means पूर्वसंस्कार ।

3 That manifested sum of acts and tendencies is powerful and God brings it to pre-ordained fruition त विद्याकर्मणा समन्वारभेते पूर्वप्रज्ञा च says the scripture

4 The pure spirit is bound in physical limitations like a prisoner for having fallen into ignorance and desire and sin Only by wisdom and dispassion and purity can it rise to self realisation

5 If Arjuna took in a fit of grief to Sanyasa his own nature will drive him into action Only through Karmayoga and yoga can we generate

enough purity and power to counteract the currents of desire fed from a thousand springs in previous births.

6 The theory of innate good or evil nature is propounded by Sri Madhwacharya but is rejected by the other schools of thought I think that a calm study of our scriptures will show that it is baseless The soul is pure consciousness and bliss The Karmic and physical inheritance is what is called nature and we have to free ourselves from our burdens by karma, bhakti and jnana Karma is not opposed to God's omnipotence God is law as well as Love,

न चेश्वरत्वमीशस्य हीयते तावता यतः ।
अवश्य भाविताप्येषामीश्वरेणैव निर्मिता ॥

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ ३४ ॥

For each sense there abide in its object attachment and aversion We must not come under their sway They are our real enemies in the (Godward) path

NOTES

1 The Lord then shows how the nature of each man consisting of his tendencies can be over-

come and perfected Else if the nature of each man bears him irresistibly along its currents what is the use of scriptures at all? Our tendencies generate a feeling of attachment *e g* to forbidden food and a feeling of aversion *e g* to enjoined duties The scripture teaches us the evil of harmful but liked things Will any one eat food which he knows to be poisoned however hungry he may be? Will any one turn awa from a disliked medicine if he knows that it will save his life?

2 Hence the initial desires due to pre acquired tendencies none can control But man s freedom and choice lie in his power of restraining action and curbing desire through the help of study good company and divine grace Madhusoodana says well तत्र पुरुषकारस्य शास्त्रस्य चाय विषया यत्तयोर्वश नागच्छेदिति ।

3 Nowhere in the world is such a convincing solution of the problems of free will and predestination given as in this verse Madhusoodana says ततश्चाप्रतिबद्ध शास्त्र विहित पुरुष प्रवर्तयति निषिद्धाच्च निवर्तयतीति शास्त्रार्थविवेकविज्ञानप्राबल्येन स्वाभाविकरागद्वेषयो कारणोपमर्देनोपमर्दात् प्रकृतिर्विपरीतमार्गे पुरुष शास्त्रदृष्टिं प्रवर्तयितु शक्नोतीति न शास्त्रस्य पुरुषकारस्य च वैयर्थ्यप्रसङ्ग ।

4 Venkatanatha well points out that प्रकृति becomes a factor in action only through रागद्वेष,

Scriptures enable us to overcome these तद्द्वारा च प्रकृति पुरुषस्य प्रवृत्तिनिवृत्ती जनयति। एवं स्थिते तयो रागद्वेषयोर्वशवर्ती न भवेदिति शास्त्रेण नियम्यते ।

5. Hence the proper and fruitful method is not the dissociation of the sense from the object which often intensifies the longing but the elimination of the feeling of strong desire by a realisation through the aid of scripture of evil consequences Our sum total of tendencies becomes potent only when allied to attachment and aversion We feel in forbidden pleasures a sense of bliss and an ignorance of future ill, we feel in evasions of duty a sense of ease and an ignorance of the future good of doing duty Scripture destroys these wrong notions Hence Prakriti by itself is not of dynamic power

6 It may well be asked then what is the meaning of the previous verse which says that nature is powerful and that compulsion has no controlling power? Sridhara says that Shastra (scripture steps in as a boat and saves us from being carried along the current of Prakriti and takes us across if we get into it But if we have already got into the deep waters of desire and do not get into the boat then of course there is no help

7 Sri Ramanuja points out that this verse means that राग and द्वेष cannot be conquered by merely taking up Jnanayoga and that the path of Karmayoga is far better

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ ३५ ॥

Far more auspicious is one's own duty though not of meritorious character than another's duty well performed Better is death in the discharge of one's duty than life in the discharge of another's duty The duty of another is fraught with fearful consequences

NOTES

1 The previous verse having taught the elimination of passion, how can there be any dislike of our duty? So the Lord insists on each doing his duty

2 Men's duties are determined by their qualitative potentialities which become operative at birth But social arrangements and individual upbringing may help or hinder the discharge of such duties Higher spirituality depends however on the proper discharge of such duties in the proper spirit The equipment of fitness and the equipment of motive are both indispensable

3 The disobedience to this rule has not only personal but also social consequences As a matter of fact all action has in one sense the stamp of Prakriti on it It is not of the soul There is no question of higher or lower in the realm of duties. All are equally related to the centre of God as the radii are equally related to the centre in a circle If our duty is properly done and in the right spirit, it results in the highest self realisation of the soul

1 Sri Ramanuja expounds all these verses as showing that Karma yoga is better than परधर्म or Jnana yoga The other commentators take them as showing how Karma yoga is to be effectively performed by the conquest and elimination of desire A man who merely acts is a karmi, but he who acts in the manner taught by the Lord is a Karma yogi

अर्जुन उवाच—

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ ३६ ॥

Arjuna said—

But by whom is a man impelled to commit sin, O Varshneya, as if he, though not desiring sin, is constrained by compulsion to do so?

NOTES

1 Arjuna puts this question to get a definite answer Who is the impeller to action? God or Dharma and Adharma or Raga and Dvesha? Is the soul helpless? Is it the mere theatre of a play or a mere playground for us? Can it overcome all opposition and attain to the highest? Are all the causes of equal potency? Who is the real foe of the Jiva? How can he be vanquished? Arjuna wants to know all this so that he may follow the Lord s commandments and win His grace

2 Man is not an automaton He is a moral agent His previous Karmas and vasanas determine his birth and outlook He should not give up his duty and take up other duties He should and could do his duties in a Nishkama (desireless) spirit That is his privilege as well as his obligation If Arjuna took up sanyasa, that would be fruitless *Nigraha* or self compulsion But if he fought in a *Nishkama* spirit he will be following the bent of his nature and will at the same time win the Lord s grace Duty is pre ordained but purity or im purity, virtue or sin is of our making In this respect we are free and responsible agents, Our Karmas determine our jati life and enjoyment Our Vasanas give us the initial tendencies to choice

but we can and should overcome desire and sin and if we do not, we must suffer Here is the only true reconciliation of determinism and freedom

3. Arjuna wants to know who is the most active and dreaded foe of man and the Lord tells him about this

4 Sri Ramanuja says that Arjuna asks why the jnana yogin is impelled into a life of enjoyment According to him all these verses are intended to show the superiority of karma yoga over jnana yoga

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भव ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ ३७ ॥

The Blessed Lord said

He is desire, he is anger, he is born of Rajo guna, he is all consuming and all sinful know him to be the enemy in this world

NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya explains in this verse what Bhagavan means It means the perfection of supermacy virtue fame, auspiciousness, dispassion and freedom

ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य धर्मस्य यशसः श्रियः ।
वैराग्यस्याथ मोक्षस्य षण्णां भग इतींगना ॥

It is stated also

उत्पत्तिं प्रलयं चैव भूतानामागतिं गतिम् ।
वेत्ति विद्यामविद्यां च स वाच्यो भगवानिति ॥

The word Bhagavan thus implies Omnipotence and Omniscience

2 The Lord says here that the arch enemy of man is kama It is not the initial preference due to tendency that is the cause of transgression But our desireful contemplation of the object which develops into a passion for its possession that is the real cause

It is stated अथो खल्वाहुः काममय एवायं पुरुषः ।

3 Kama is born of Rajo guna Rajo guna is the cause of delight in outer things and results in desire and attachment (*trishna* and *sanga*)

4 It is of the nature of all consuming eagerness It is well said

यत्पृथिव्यां व्रीहियवं हिरण्यं पशवः स्त्रियः ।
नालमेकस्य तत्सर्वमिति मत्वा शमं व्रजेत् ॥

It is said also

न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।
हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मेव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

5 In the case of an enemy there are four methods of dealing with him साम, दान, भेद, दण्ड (peace, gift, diplomacy, and war) In the case of this enemy the first three methods are useless The more you give, the more he takes, The more friendly you are the more domineering he becomes Nor can diplomacy avail Kind treatment is suicidal

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure then pity then embrace —(*Pope*)

Hence दण्ड is the only proper method in the case of *kama*

6 Sri Sankaracharya points out that only kama is transformed into krodha (anger) when desire is obstructed in its progress towards enjoyment It is stated ऋते काम न कोपाद्या जायन्ते हि कथंचन।

7 Verses 62 and 63 in Chapter II show how the succession of soul deluding states arise

8 In Santiparva Mahabharata kama is compared to a tree of which all other passions are parts and the soul is tied to it by iron chains

हृदि कामद्रुमश्चित्रो मोहसंचयसंभव ।
क्रोधमानमहास्कन्धो विधित्सापरिषेचन ॥

तस्य चाज्ञानमाधारः प्रमादः परिषेचनम् ।
सोऽभ्यसूयापलाशो हि पुरादुष्कृतसारवान् ॥
संमोहचिन्ताविटपः शोकशाखो भयाङ्कुरः ।
मोहिनीभिः पिपासाभिर्लताभिरनुवेष्टितः ॥
उपासते महावृक्षं सुलुब्धास्तत्फलेप्सवः ।
आयसैः संयताः पाशैः फलद परिवेष्टय तम् ॥

9 Such is the power of Kama. It is said:

अकामस्य क्रिया काचिद्दृश्यते नेह कर्हिचित् ।
यद्यद्धि कुरुते जन्तुस्तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् ॥

**धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ ३८ ॥**

As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the womb, even so is this (self-consciousness of the soul) enveloped by it (Kama or desire.)

NOTES.

1. The three illustrations represent different degrees of density of envelopment. Also, as Sri Desikar points out, the first illustration shows that desire is co-existent as smoke with fire, constantly reverts as dust to the mirror, and envelops us so fully as the womb envelops the foetus, that for release expert aid is necessary. Sri Madhu-

soodana explains another aspect. In the first stage desire is not so forceful just as smoke surrounds the fire but does not lesson its power to burn. In the second stage it is more powerful and dims the soul as dust dims the mirror and deprives it of its reflecting power. But the mirror is visible. In the third stage it is very powerful and grips and hides the soul, as the foetus is hidden and imprisoned. Sankarananda says that the Lord emphasises the difference between desire and wisdom. The former is dark, opaque, and inanimate; the latter is bright transparent, and animate. The former colours the soul dark as smoke colours the fire dark; it destroys the transparency and reflecting power of the soul as dust destroys the same of the mirror; and it makes the soul lifeless as the amnion renders the embryo a helpless prisoner. Dhanapati says that the three illustrations show that desire prevents knowledge from revealing the Atman; it next prevents the seeing of things as they are; and it finally destroys discrimination. Sri Madhwa says that the illustrations represent the action of desire on three classes of souls. He quotes from Brahma Tarka:

तत्र कामः कालनेमिः सर्वे धूममलोल्बवत् ।
शुभमध्याधमजनं क्रमादावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥

आवृत ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९ ॥

Knowledge is enveloped by this desire, which is the incessantly active foe of the wise Such desire is hard to fulfil and is insatiable

NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya says that desire is the incessantly active foe of the wise man, for only the latter sees the operations of the enemy The fool is under the domination of desire and knows nothing about the foe In the case of this meaning नित्यवैरिणा goes with ज्ञानिन ।

2 Or ज्ञानिनो may go with ज्ञान and desire may be viewed as the enemy of all But the former is clearly the better meaning

3 The word अनल is used to mean insatiable or a flame नाग्निस्तृप्यति काष्ठानां ।

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ ४० ॥

The senses, the mind, and the will are said to be his seats, by means of these he deludes the jiva (soul) by veiling his wisdom

NOTES :

1. Buddhi is the will, the region of concepts and determinations. Mind is the lower region of motor impulses and sensory impressions. The senses are the channels of knowledge. Kama goes through the outer gates and finally captures the fort and then the citadel. Hence watch the gates. Each sensation of pleasure will not be an enemy but for the co-ordinating mind and will that remember and associate pleasures with objects under the sway of desire.

2. In connection with this we must remember the beautiful simile in the Kathopanishad about the soul being the owner of a chariot (*viz.*, the body), the will being the charioteer, the mind being the reins, and the senses being the horses. In the Bhagavata (skandha IV Chapter 25) the Puranja-nopakhyanam brings out the inter-relations of the soul and the senses in a telling way.

3. The Lord tells us the stronghold of the enemy so that we may kill him. Else he will trouble us again and again Sri Madhvacharya says well: वधार्थं शत्रोरधिष्ठानमाह । हताधिष्ठानो हि शत्रुर्नश्यति ।

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

Therefore, O chief of Bharatas, controlling first the senses, kill him (desire) who is sin and who is the destroyer of knowledge and realisation

NOTES

1 ज्ञान is book learning विज्ञान is realisation

2 The purification of mind and will has to follow the control of the senses Only then it will succeed

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ ४२ ॥

The senses are said to be higher than (the body), the mind is higher than the senses, the determinative faculty is higher than the mind, and He is higher than the determinative faculty

NOTES

1 *Manas* is the mind in which the alternations of doubt and determination exist *Buddhi* is the mind in the state of determinateness

2 The above translation brings out what is the aid of the higher power to conquer and control the lower power From each lower plane which is

under the control of Kama or desire, he has to be dislodged with the help of the higher power

3 That this is the meaning is clear from the corresponding verses in the Kathopanishad

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः ॥
महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात्पुरुषः परः ।
पुरुषान्न परं किंचित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥

4 The region of steadfastness and clarity of ideas is Buddhi It is from there that the light of intellection comes It is itself illumined and vitalised by the Atman The realised self identity of the soul is the background which renders memory and coherence of mental life possible The will is the channel of the ultimate illumination and energy which brighten and sustain everything

5 Sri Ramanuja says that स is desire According to him the verse means that we have various enemies—the senses the mind, reason and desire—the last being the arch enemy But this interpretation is against the spirit of the Katha Upanishad mantras above stated Further though the impure mind is our enemy the pure mind is our friend and helper

6 Sri Madhwa says that what are described in this verse are the divinities presiding over the senses the mind etc

7 With the aid of the Supreme all the enemies of our realisation are overthrown—that is the great truth taught in this verse as stated in Chapter II of the Gita रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य पर दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते । Why are the senses higher than the body? Because they are in all bodies and are subtler than the body Why is the mind higher than the senses? Because the mind is subtler than them and desire becomes potent only when the mind is under its sway The determinative faculty is higher than the mind as when it comes under the sway of desire it makes the mind dynamic and concentrated and forceful He is higher than all and with His aid we can conquer all the enemies of the soul

एव बुद्ध पर बुद्ध्वा सस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रु महाबाहो कामरूप दुरासदम् ॥ ४३ ॥

Thus realising Him to be higher than the determinative faculty and controlling the lower mind by the higher and purified mind, O mighty armed one, kill the enemy who is of the form of desire and whom it is difficult to approach and overthrow

NOTES

1. The Lord shows that only through God's grace can be overthrown the basis nescience (मूलाज्ञान) which is the real origin of desire.

2. The arch-enemy, if he is merely beaten may return and give trouble. So the Lord tells us what are his strongholds, what are his real sources of power, what are our aids in overthrowing him and how he is to be destroyed.

3. As the Kathopanishad says.

यदा सर्वे प्रभिद्यन्ते हृदयस्येह ग्रन्थयः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

1. Sri Madhusoodana sums up the teaching of this Chapter thus.—

उपायः कर्मनिष्ठात्र प्राधान्येनोपसंहृता ।
उपेयाज्ञाननिष्ठा तु तद्गुणत्वेन कीर्तिता ॥

The Karmayoga which is the means of self-realisation is the chief topic of the chapter. The blessedness of wisdom which is the goal is also hinted at in it.

2. Sri Yamunacharya thus sums up the chapter :

असक्त्या लोकरक्षायै गुणेष्वारोप्य कर्तृताम् ।
सर्वेश्वरे वा न्यस्योक्ता तृतीये कर्मकार्यता ॥

The Lord teaches Karmayoga to be performed in a spirit of non attachment and for the good of the world realising that the real agents are the Gunas and surrendering everything to the Supreme

3 It is Karmayoga that leads to *Naishkar ya* and *Moksha* What eaves is the combination of the active l ody and the unattached mind as opposed to the combination of the inactive body and the attached mind The Lord teaches this truth with a divine affluence of argument and illustration He teaches that absolute vorklessness is impossible that he who begins with quiescent senses and pleasure dreaming mind is a मिथ्याचार, that a seeker after perfec ion should control his senses and perform Karmayoga and that without action l fe will fail He then gives us the injunction of the Creator at the beginning of the creation and tells us how the cosmic wheel moves on Karmayoga leads us to the Supreme Janaka and others attained the highest in that way Not content with this the Lord instances his own supreme example as a Karmayo‿in Every man should realise that the real agents in action are the mind and the

senses He must dedicate to the Supreme his actions and the fruits thereof Then only will he attain peace and perfection The chief enemy in his path is *Kama or desire*. His favourite seats are the senses, the mind, and the intellect. Dislodge him from these by the control of the senses perfected by the control of the mind. Seek the aid of God for this end and slay the arch enemy of the soul and live in eternal bliss Such are the teachings of the third Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita,

Thus ends the Chapter KARMA YOGA

CHAPTER IV

Karma Brahmarpana Yoga

श्रीभगवानुवाच-

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥

The blessed Bhagavan said

I told this Eternal Yoga to the Sun God, He taught it to Manu, and Manu taught it to Ikshvaku

NOTES

1 The topics dealt with in this chapter are thus described in Sri Yamunacharya's Gitartha Sangraha

प्रसङ्गात्स्वस्वभावोक्तिः कर्मणोऽकर्मतास्य च ।
भेदा ज्ञानस्य माहात्म्यं चतुर्थेऽध्याय उच्यते ॥

2 Sri Sankaracharya says that the Lord has summed up His gracious doctrine and now gives up its blessed geneology to show that it is वेदार्थ (the essence of the Veda) योऽयं योगोऽध्यायद्वयेनोक्तो ज्ञाननिष्ठालक्षणः ससंन्यासः कर्मयोगोपायः यस्मिन् वेदार्थः परिसमाप्तः प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो निवृत्तिलक्षणश्च, गीतासु च सर्वास्वयमेव योगो विवक्षितो भगवता । अतः परिसमाप्तं वेदार्थं मन्वानस्तं वंशकथनेन स्तौति श्रीभगवान् ।

3 The topics described in the verse above quoted are further clearly detailed in Sri Ramanuja-charya's introduction thus

तृतीयऽध्याय प्रकृतिससृष्टस्य मुमुक्षो सहसा ज्ञानयोगेऽनाधिकारात् कर्मयोग एव कार्य ज्ञानयोगाधिकारिणोऽप्यकर्तृत्वानुसधानपूर्वककर्मयोग एव श्रेयानिति सहेतुकमुक्तम्, विशिष्टतया व्यपदेश्यस्य तु विशेषत कर्मयोग एव कार्य इति चोक्तम् । चतुर्थेनेदानीमस्यैव कर्मयोगस्य निखिलजगदुद्धारणाय मन्वन्तरादिवोपदिष्टतया कर्तव्यतां द्रढयित्वा अन्तर्गतज्ञानतयाऽस्यैव ज्ञानयोगाकारतां प्रदर्श्य कर्मयोगस्वरूप तद्भेदा कर्मयोगो ज्ञानाशस्यैव प्राधान्य चोच्यते । प्रसङ्गाच्च भगवदवतारयाथात्म्यमुच्यते ॥

4 Sri Madhvacharya says with a brevity that is quite consistent with thoroughness

बुद्धे परस्य माहात्म्य कर्मभेदो ज्ञानमाहात्म्य चोच्यतेऽस्मिन ध्याये ।

5 Narayana is thus not merely the causeless first cause of the Universe but also its आदिगुरु (first teacher). The familiar stanzas "यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वम्" and "नारायण पद्मभुव वसिष्ठम्" show this

6 Some pseudo scholars have seen in the geneology some significant omission of Brahmin teachers. There are different lines of teaching as there are separate beams from the central Sun The teaching must be given only to *adhikaris* (those

fit for initiation) These will lead other fit persons to the truth "स्वयं तीर्णः परान् तारयति"

7 The Yoga is called *Avyaya* as it gives the eternal fruit of Moksha

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥ २ ॥

The royal seers knew what it was they thus handed down in uninterrupted succession This yoga, by long lapse of time, has declined in the world, O slayer of foes

NOTES

1 The importance of uninterrupted transmission of knowledge is stated in this verse

2 The yoga declined because it came into the hands of those who were not strong of soul दुर्बलानजितेन्द्रियान्प्राप्य नष्टं योगम् (Sri Sankaracharya)

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः सनातनः।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥

The very same eternal Yoga has been declared to thee today by me, because thou art my devotee and my friend, it is the supreme secret.

Notes

1. The knowledge has to be conserved and imparted to good men The Scripture says

"विद्या ह वै ब्राह्मणमाजगाम गोपाय मा शेवधिष्टेऽहमस्मि ।
असूयकायानृजवेऽयताय न मा ब्रूया वीर्यवती तथा स्याम् ।"

अर्जुन उवाच—

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ ४ ॥

Arjuna said —

Your birth was recent, whereas the birth of the Sun-God was ancient How can I know that you declared this at the beginning ?

Notes

1 The old controversy as to whether Arjuna knew the divinity of Sri Krishna or not and why he put the question is not of much interest We may take it that he put it to know the full truth from the divine lips and to make his question a means of enlightening humanity for all time.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परंतप ॥ ५ ॥

The Blessed Bhagavan said —

Many have been my past incarnations and many also have been thy births I know them all but thou knowest them not, O Conqueror of foes

Notes

1 Nilakantha says that the Lord mentions His सर्वज्ञत्व (omniscience) to make Arjuna realise the eternity of the Lord's form His incarnation is not like human birth—varying helpless, dependent—but changeless self revealed and independent

2 Arjuna had two doubts 1 Did the Lord, incarnate in another body, teach the Sun God? If so, how could he remember that while he (Arjuna) could not remember his past actions? 2 If the Lord, incarnate in this very body, taught the Sun God, how could this body have existed at the beginning of creation? The present verse contains the solution of the first doubt

3 The Jiva is तिरोभूतज्ञानशक्तिः and hence cannot remember the past births His body is due to Karma (कर्मवश) The Lord is अप्रतिहतज्ञानशक्ति and to him the Past, the Present and the Future is one Infinite Present His incarnation is due to His mercy and not due to any Karma

4 The Lord uses परंतप to show that Arjuna may be a vanquisher of outer enemies but it is more difficult to vanquish the inner enemies

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥ ६ ॥

Though I am unborn and am of eternal nature and though I am the Lord of all beings, self controlling mine own Prakriti, I incarnate through my Maya

NOTES

1 The Lord's incarnation is not due to any desire आप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा । लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम् ।

2 The Lord's Auspicious Form is Eternal नित्यैव सा जगन्मूर्तिः ।

3 The Lord's Incarnation is unlike the *Jiva's* reincarnation The former is due to His unfettered Mercy, the latter is due to *Karmic* compulsion Both are however eternal

4 The Lord though master of *Prakriti*, is through His Maya, born by his gracious wish to be embodied in Prakriti to save erring humanity अजायमानो बहुधा विजायते—says *Sruti* (Scripture)

5 God's immanence and trancendence and

6 The doctrine of Incarnation is the sole possession and peculiar glory of Hinduism

7 There are full incarnations i e पूर्णावतार (likeKrishna) and also *Amsavataras* (अंशावतार) i e partial manifestations

8 A beautiful stanza in the Bhagavata says that the Lord's birth as son to human beings is like the birth of the full moon in the Eastern sky—an occasion and not an effect

देवक्या देवरूपिण्या विष्णु सर्वगुहाशय ।
आविरासीद्यथा प्राच्या दिशीन्दुरिव पुष्कल ॥
(X Skandha 3rd Adhyaya Verse 8)

9 God uses Prakriti to disclose human manifestation But He is the lord of Prakriti while the jiva's human embodiment is due to the power of Prakriti ,

10 The three Indian schools of thought quarrel over the reality or the apparent character of the incarnation and the significance of Maya But the fight is more apparent than real In relation

to the Cosmos the Lord has various दिव्यमङ्गलविग्रहs. Apart from such relation to the world He is Sacchidananda Emphasis on either aspect brings about the quarrels of logicians But the scripture is clear enough on the point Whether the embodiment is called शुद्धसत्त्व or अप्राकृत, the fight is mainly one of words and not one of facts

11 It has been well said

देवानां कार्यसिद्ध्यर्थमाविर्भवति सा यदा ।
उत्पन्नेति तदा लोके सा नित्याप्यभिधीयते ॥

12 If He who is beyond the planes of mind and speech and sight can come into the plane of mind, is there anything to obstruct His coming into the plane of speech or the plane of vision?

13 The following verses are beautiful and reveal to us beautiful aspects of the same truth

कृष्णमेनमवेहि त्वमात्मानमखिलात्मनाम् ।
जगद्धिताय सोऽप्यत्र देहीवाभाति मायया ॥
अहो भाग्यमहो भाग्य नन्दगोपव्रजौकसाम् ।
यन्मित्र परमानन्द पूर्णं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥
(*Krishnakarnamrita*)

14 The two words प्रकृति and माया relate to the same truth मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यात् They are both used here to indicate the material and the power. देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् । Sri Sankaracharya says in

his Sutra Bhashya: स्यात्परमेश्वरस्यापीच्छावशान्मायामयं रूपं साधकानुग्रहार्थम्। Sri Ramanujacharya says that माया means संकल्प Sri Madhvacharya says that it means ज्ञान or इच्छा. Sri Venkatanatha objects to this. But in the light of what I have stated above it is clear that these meanings are not in vital conflict with the proper advaitic conception of *Maya*—distinguishing between Maya in relation to the Cosmos and Maya in relation to Brahman.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्॥ ७॥

O Bharata, whenever there is the weakening of Dharma and there is the rise of Adharma, I create Myself.

NOTES

1. *Dharma* referred to here is Varnashrama Dharma, the source of all good here and hereafter. Such is the description and interpretation in Sri Sankaracharya's Bhashya वर्णाश्रमादिलक्षणस्य प्राणिना-मभ्युदयनिश्रेयससाधनस्य.

2. Dhanapati says that the Lord indicates that Arjuna, being a man born in the holy land and the line of Bharata should not act against Dharma

and that hence he is addressed by the Lord as Bharata in this verse

3 The Lord says that He incarnates whenever Dharma is overborne by Adharma

4 It is not to be understood that the Lord can effect the suppression of Adharma only by incarnating in the world His will is enough. But out of His grace to show his beauty and Love to all and draw their eyes and hearts to His lotus feet and to establish Dharma by precept and practice He incarnates in the world Sri Madhvacharya says न जन्मनैव परित्राणादिक कार्यमिति नियम । तथापि लीलया स्वभावेन यथेष्टचारी । तथा चोक्त । देवस्यैष स्वभावोऽय । लोकवत्तु लीला कैवल्यम् ।

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥ ८ ॥

For the protection of the righteous and the destruction of the unrighteous and for the firm establishment of Dharma, I incarnate from *yuga* to *yuga*

NOTES

1 The Incarnation does not wait till there is नाश (destruction) of धर्म He comes when there is ग्लानि (languishing) of Dharma and when there is

the rising up (अभ्युत्थान)—which is far less than the triumph— of Adharma.

2. These are times when He comes himself as in the case of Lord Krishna. At other times we have *Amsavataras* and *Avesavataras*. The present stanza and the preceding stanza refer to these two facts.

3. The important thing to remember is that in both cases the cause is His grace and His incarnation is not like our birth which is कर्मवश (due to the power of *Karma*.)

4. Incarnations take place more than once in the same yuga when the conditions require the Lord's incarnation

5. Sri Madhvacharya well refers to a scriptural passsage which says:

पूर्णोऽयमस्यात्र न किंचिदाप्यं तथापि सर्वाः कुरुते प्रवृत्तीः ।

6. Such punishing of the wicked also is for their good and out of love and grace. The निग्रह (punishment) is really *Anugraha* (grace). It is well said लालने ताडने मातुर्नाकारुण्यं हि यथार्भके । तद्वदेव महेशस्य नियन्तुर्गुणदोषयोः ॥

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ ९ ॥

He who thus truly knows my divine birth and action, does not on leaving the body attain birth again but attains Me, O Arjuna.

NOTES

1 He who knows and realises the Lord truly attains Him

2 तत्वत तत्त्व – स्वभाव (nature)

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ १० ॥

Freed from attachment, fear and anger realising oneness with me, taking refuge in Me, —many persons, purified by the austerity of wisdom, have attained My being.

NOTES

1. Knowledge is the true and effective liberator The Lord says न हि ज्ञानेन सदृश पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

2 परम तप is thus defined मनसश्चेन्द्रियाणा च ह्यैकाग्र्य तप It is the steady direction of the mind and the senses towards Him

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्या. पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ११ ॥

In whatever way men approach me, even

so do I come to them O Partha, from all directions, men tread the path that leads to me

NOTES

1 The fruit is proportioned to the desire and the endeavour Those who desire fruits lower than Moksha get them He gives jnana to the Mumukshu He gives Moksha to those who yearn for liberation and practise perfect renunciation as stated in the last verse The Lord says later on

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥

2 Sri Nilakantha well says that he who loves or hates man who is God s reflection loves or hates God and gets fitting fruit This does not mean God s kindness or unkindness but such is His law which is also Love He says ततश्च मद्विंबभूते प्राणिजाते यथा य प्रीतिं द्वेष वा करोति नास्म प्रातिविंबभूतेऽहमपि प्रीतिं च द्वेष च करोमि । बिंबपूजापरिभूती प्रतिबिंब एव सक्रामतोऽतो न मम वैषम्यनैर्घृण्ये स्त । तस्माच्छ्रेयोऽर्थिना सर्वस्य कल्याणायैव यतितव्यमिति भाव ।

3 A passage in the Agneya Purana says

अन्यदेवतपूजापि यस्मिन्नन्ते समर्पिता ।
स्वर्गादिफलदा स्यान्नान्यथा त भजेद्धरिम् ॥

4 Hence the Lord has no preferences The

fruit is proportioned to the desire and the endeavour.

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ १२ ॥

Those who desire the fulfilment and success of actions worship the gods, because the successful fruition of actions is quickly attained in the world of men.

NOTES:

1. The Lord says that all do not realise the supreme Lord because desirous of quick fruitions of actions men seek the grace of various deities by worship. They are unable to rise to the heights of निष्कामकर्म and निष्कामभक्ति. But even they tread His path, because such worship will generate eventually Nishkama Karma and Bhakti and lead to the attainment of the Supreme.

2. The Lord says later on:

येऽप्यन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय भजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

The fourfold caste division was created by me

through differentiations of Guna and Karma (quality and action) Though I am the creator of it, know that I am the eternal non doer and witness

NOTES

1 The Lord explains why it is that men take to diverse forms of search and worship It is owing to their potential deeds and desires that have led to their birth They follow My path as their birth into the various castes is due to My direction It is on earth that men do work as the result of potential deeds and desires and attain to the lower or the higher fruitions according to their faith and endeavour

2 चातुर्वर्ण्यं has been defined as चतुर्णां वर्णानां हित चातुर्वर्ण्यम् ।

3 Diverseness of desires and deeds is due to diverseness of initial endowment of potential desires and deeds Sri Madhusoodana says शरीरारम्भकगुणवैष्यादेव न सर्वे समानस्वभावा — But all tend eventually towards His path and all fulfil their being by work and worship

4 Nilakantha says that the Lord s view is that He has created the world of men conformably to deeds and desires (and as all the devatas are His

children, worship to these also pleaseth Him यतश्चातुर्वर्ण्यं गुणकर्मभया सृष्टं ततोऽन्यदेवतानामपि मद्रूपत्वात्प्रीत्या पितुरिव तत्प्रीत्या ममैव तृप्तिरस्तीत्यर्थः ।

5 गुणकर्मविभागश — Divergence of qualities and deeds are the cause and the effect of births. These are the result of creation and not subject to human alterations But this does not mean any disparagement or inequality Certain qualities and deeds are common to all (सामान्यधर्म), others are differentiated according to birth निष्कामकर्म in the doing of the actions enjoined on each caste and भक्ति which is common to all bring the same blessed fruits to all Divergence of actions does not mean divergence of hearts The caste system is perfectly compatible with peace, love, and democratic equality and is, in fact, the only secure basis of these

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥ १४ ॥

He who knows that actions do not bind me and that I have no desire for the fruits of action is himself not bound by its actions.

NOTES

1 The Lord says that his action not being due to desire but being due to grace and mercy

do not fetter him with the bonds of reincarnation and birth He is always Perfect and Free आप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा

2 He who realises God like this is himself freed from the fetters of birth—because in him also the drivings of desire and the false sense of कर्तृत्व (agency) cease to be

3 The Ishopanishad says well

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजिविषेच्छतं समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

4 Naradiya Purana says

कर्तापि भगवान्विष्णुरकर्तेति च कथ्यते ।
तस्य कर्ता यतो नान्यः स्वतन्त्रत्वान्महात्मनः ॥

5 God's actions are due to grace and mercy and not to desire and passion

अकाङ्क्षन्नपि देवोऽसौ नेच्छति लोकवत्परः ।
न ह्याप्तकामस्य विष्णोर्ज्ञानं कामो हि तस्य तु ॥

6 Realising Him and His *Leelas* results in our attaining similar freedom from the bondage of actions

ज्ञात्वा तमेवं मनसा हृदा च भूयो न मृत्युमुपयाति विद्वान् ।

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ १५ ॥

Knowing thus, action was performed by the ancient seekers after liberation Do thou, therefore, perform action, as did our forefathers in the olden time.

NOTES

1 If we have not yet realised Truth we must do our duty for the attainment of purity and vision If we have realised it we must do duty for the sake of the proper guidance of the world Sri Sankaracharya says यद्यनात्मज्ञस्त्वं तदात्मशुद्ध्यर्थं तत्त्ववित्-लोकसंग्रहार्थम् ।

2 That the path has been trodden by the ancient seekers and seers is a proof of its being the right path.

A beautiful stanza in the Bhagavata says

एष एव हि लोकानां शिवः पन्थाः सनातनः ।
यं पूर्वे चानुसंतस्थुर्यत्प्रमाणं जनार्दन ॥

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

Even sages are bewildered as to what is action and what is non action I shall therefore declare to you what is action, by knowing which you shall be freed from the bondage of inauspiciousness (i.e., samsara or brith and death)

NOTES:

1. The Lord emphasised in the previous verse the fact that the auspicious path of Dharma was that trodden by the ancient seekers after liberation. Why did the Lord emphasize in this? Was there any difficulty in knowing the path? Yes, says the Lord, it is difficult to know the true path. I shall reveal it to you.

2. Further, what is required is not a blind following of the path trodden by the ancient seekers, but an intelligent following of it. आवश्यकत्वेऽपि न कर्मणो गतानुगतिकतयानुष्ठानं कर्तव्यम्। किं तु "ज्ञात्वा कर्माणि कुर्वीत" इति वचनात् कर्माश्रितं किंचिद्विशेषं ज्ञापयितुमुपोद्घातयति (Sridhara).

3. Sri Ramanujacharya says that अकर्म means the nature of the soul, अकर्मेति कर्तुरात्मनो यथात्मज्ञानमुच्यते।

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः॥ १७॥

One must know the nature of the enjoined action; one must know also the nature of what is the prohibited action; and one must futher know the nature of non-action. Mysterious is the true nature of action.

NOTES

1 Doing enjoined actions and refraining from prohibited actions and realising the detached nature of the soul—must be, intelligent acts and not acts blindly done

2 The Chhandogya Upanishad says यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपनिषदा तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं भवति ।

3 The Lord means to lay down here the true nature of *Pravritti* and *Nivritti*

4 Sri Ramanujacharya takes अकर्म to mean ज्ञान and विकर्म to mean विविधकर्म *i.e.*, नित्यनैमित्तिककाम्य कर्माणि ।

5 Sri Madhva interprets कर्मण as— कर्म न (*i.e.*, Karma is from God) So also विकर्म and अकर्म are from God They flow from a Divine cause and hence the difficulty to fathom them

अज्ञात्वा भगवान् कस्य कर्माकर्मविकर्मकम् ।
दर्शनं याति हि मुने कुतो मुक्तिश्च तद्विना ॥

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ १८ ॥

He who sees non-action in action and action in non-action is the wise one among men; he is the *yogi* and he is the full performer of action

NOTES

1 This verse is the solution of the problem stated in the previous stanza It reads like a riddle but its meaning is clear

We must realise that though apparently there is doing, man is not essentially a doer Just as when a ship moves the trees on the land seem to move but do not really move, so we must overcome the illusion of doing by the realisation of the reality of the non doing Similarly we must realise that non-doing which has no outward manifestations is really a potent effort by way of inhibition The strenuousness of renunciation is at least as great as the strenuousness of work

2. It is the sense of being an actor that brings about the aspect of action. It is only then that there is the clinging of fruits to us When the former goes, action becomes godlike and there is no bondage Only then do we realise the freedom which is the true end of action

3 If a man merely remains quiet, thinking that non-doing is a source of pleasure, this is only the illusion of false inaction and not the reality of the true inaction

4 There are times when *akarma* (inaction) becomes a sin, e g , when a refugee comes for refuge

and we do not protect him एवमौदासीन्यमकर्मापि शाक्यस्या- परित्राणामत्वाद्विकर्मणि पर्यवस्यति ।

5 Even karma becomes *akarma* (inaction) if there is no *Sraddha* faith and *Vikarma* if there is दम्भ (ostentation)

अश्रद्धया हुत दत्त तपस्तप्तं कृत च यत् ।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥
चत्वारि कर्माण्यभयकराणि भय प्रयच्छन्त्यन्यथाकृतानि ।
मानाग्निहोत्रमुत मानमौन मानेनाधीतमुत मानयज्ञ ॥

6 Sridhara points out that the non-doing of an enjoined act is like the doing of a prohibited act in the production of evil consequences अकर्मणि चा- विहिताकरणे कर्म य पश्येत्तस्य प्रत्यवायोत्पादकत्वेन बन्धहेतुत्वात् । Nilakantha also says विहिताकरणे प्रतिषिद्धकरणे च कर्मदृ- ष्टिरेव भवेत् । अकर्मतो विभ्यत्कर्म ब्रह्मदृष्ट्या कुर्यात् न स्वकर्मापि तादृशदृष्ट्या कुर्यादित्यर्थं ।

7 The true non action is when through action, action falls off and the soul attains ब्राह्मी स्थिति।

न कर्माणि त्यजेद्योगी कर्मभिस्त्यज्यते ह्यसौ ।

8 Another philosophic meaning of this stanza is given byMadhusoodana He who sees *Akarma* (Brahma) in karma jnana rupa (action of the form of jnana), and who sees *karma* (the whole cosmos) in Akarma the subject, is the truly wise man

9 Sri Madhvacharya gives us another aspect He says that we must see *akarma* (that we are not the real doers and that god is the real agent) in karma and that we must see *karma* (god s ever watchful protective work) even in *akar na* (our inaction and sleep) Karma according to this great teacher means here jiva and akarma means god कर्मणि क्रियमाण यदि अकर्म य पश्येद्विष्णोरेव कर्म नाह चित्प्रतिबिम्ब किंचित्करामीति ।

10 Sri Ramanujacharya says that *akarma* is *jnana* that *karmayoga* and *jnanayoga* (in the sense of the realisation of the nature of the *jiva* आत्मयाथात्म्य ज्ञान) are interdependent and interconnected that the proper doing of *karma* is when we know the real nature of the soul and that the realisation of the nature of the soul is an internal karma

11 The idea contained in this verse is thus stated in Srimad Bhagavata

यथा भ्रमरिकादृष्ट्या भ्राम्यतीव नभोन्तरम् ।
चित्ते कर्तरि तत्रा मा कर्तवाहृधिया स्मृत ॥

12 The commentaries contain mutually destructive criticisms in regard to the meanings and aspects indicated above I strongly deprecate the revival of such controversies because when we adopt the method—which I beg leave to adopt and to suggest as the right method—of a compositeness of out

look in which all angles of vision have a place in the fulness of realisation, all concordant notes have a place and have each its due place.

13 Janaka and Suka are our highest examples to illustrate the meaning of this great verse

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥ १९ ॥

The wise men call him a man of realisation whose undertakings are all free from desire and egotism and whose actions are burnt up by the fire of wisdom.

NOTES

1 Sankalpa (egotism) is the cause of *kama* (desire)

2 The wise man's work will be due to his desire of helping the world's evolution (lokasangraha) or the bare maintenance of his body (जीवनमात्रार्थं).

3 The scripture says

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि स्थिताः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥

4 The conquest of the bondage of karma is thus described in the following *sutra*

तदधिगम उत्तरपूर्वाघयोरश्लेषविनाशौ तद्व्यपदेशात् ।

5 Sri Ramanuja thus beautifully describes *sankalpa* प्रकृत्या तद्गुणैश्चात्मानमेकाकृत्यानुसधान सङ्कल्प ।

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किंचित्करोति सः ॥ २० ॥

Having abandoned clinging to the fruits of actions, full of eternal contentment and not dependent on anything else,—though engaged in doing action, he does not do anything

NOTES

1 He does his work to help the world or to prevent censure by the pure He is contented and self dependent

2 When work blossoms into worship and worship fructifies into realisation, the bondage of work ceases

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।
शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ २१ ॥

Without desireful expectation controlling the mind and the body and the senses, having relinquished all acquisitiveness, doing only such acts as are necessary to maintain the body, he does not commit any sin

Notes

1 मनः, बुद्धि, चित्त, and अहंकार are aspects of mind. They are reason, determinative faculty, memory and egoism.

2. In the case of ascetics various abstentions are enjoined

मधु मांसं च मद्यं च ताम्बूलं तैलमौषधम् ।
त्याज्यान्यष्टौ यतेर्दूरात्तथा कान्ता च काञ्चनम् ॥

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥ २२ ॥

Content with what is got without effort, unfettered by the pairs of opposites, free from envy and hate, even-minded in attainment and non-attainment—he, though doing actions, is not bound thereby

Notes

1 The same idea is conveyed in the verse

अयाचितमसंक्लृप्तमुपपन्नं यदृच्छया ।

2 Ascetics should have the minimum of possessions

कौपीनयुगलं वासः कन्थां शीतनिवारिणीम् ।
पादुके चापि गृह्णीयात्कुर्यान्नान्यस्य संग्रहम् ॥

3 These verses give us the key to that power of transmutation by which actions lose their iron-ness of binding power and become the gold of bliss

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ २३ ॥

In the case of him from whom attachment has gone, who is liberated, whose mind is centred steadfastly in wisdom and who does work in a spirit of sacrificial offering to God, all action dissolves away

NOTES

1 The same idea is expressed in this verse also These verses teach us the mystic secret of making actions the means of liberation

2 It is well said

न्यायागतधनस्तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठोऽतिथिप्रियः ।
श्राद्धकृत्सत्यवादी च गृहस्थोऽपि विमुच्यते ॥

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥ २४ ॥

The means of oblation is Brahman, the clarified butter offered is Brahman, the offering is by the priest who is Brahman in the fire which is

Brahman; the place of attainment is Brahman through the realisation of action as Brahman

NOTES

1 In the case of the wise who work for lokasangraha, the realisation of God in everything is full and perfect, and in their case *karma* is really *akarma* This is what is called यथाक्रतुन्याय (the motive determines the fruit)

2 In him there will be no distinctions of desires or expectations, and no ideas of क्रिया, कारक and फल Such is ज्ञानयज्ञ

3 The Vartikakara says well

कारकव्यवहार हि शुद्ध वस्तु न वीक्ष्यते ।
शुद्धे वस्तुनि सिद्धे च कारकव्यापृति कुत ॥

4 Sri Ramanuja, consistently with his philosophy, explains the underlying idea thus ब्रह्मात्मकतया ब्रह्मभूतमात्मस्वरूप गन्तव्यम् । मुमुक्षुणा क्रियमाण कर्म परब्रह्मात्मकमेवेत्यनुसन्धानयुक्ततया ज्ञानाकार साक्षादात्मावलोकनसाधन ज्ञाननिष्ठाव्यवधानेनेत्यर्थ ।

5 Sri Madhva appropriately quotes the following verse from Padma Purana

त्वदधीन यत सर्वमत सर्वो भवानिति ।

6 The difference between the school of thought which says तत्स्वरूप and that which says

तदधीन is in relation to what the former calls the पराकाष्ठा. So far as the negation of egoism and the affirmation of bliss through realisation of God are concerned, both agree In the present verse it is the latter aspect that is stressed and we should not bring in discussions about the former

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।
ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥ २५ ॥

Some yogis perform sacrifices to the Devas (gods), others offer the self as sacrifice by the self alone in the fire of Brahman

NOTES

1. The former half refers to the performance of Darsapoornamasa, Jyotishtoma, and other sacrifices The latter refers to the realisation of the identity of soul and God through meditation Sri Sankara says

सोपाधिकस्यात्मनो निरुपाधिकेन परब्रह्मस्वरूपेणैव यद्दर्शन स तस्मिन्होम त कुर्वन्ति ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वदर्शननिष्ठा इत्यर्थः ।

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।
शब्दादीन्विषयानन्ये इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥ २६ ॥

Some offer as sacrifice the ears and other senses in the fires of self control Others offer sound and other sense-objects in the fires of the senses.

NOTES

1 संयम is धारणा, ध्यान, and समाधि. The Homa stated in the first half of the verse is perfecting प्रत्याहार into धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि

2 The Homa (oblation) stated in the second half of the verse is the sensing of permitted things by excluding forbidden things Sri Sankara says आत्मादिभिरविरुद्धग्रहण होम मन्यन्ते ।

3 These are the gradations of self control resorted to so that we may become experts in self-control which alone leads to the bliss of self realisation

4 That different forms of self control lead to different attainments is thus stated in the Yoga-sutras भुवनज्ञान सूर्ये संयमाच्चन्द्र ताराव्यूहज्ञान कण्ठकूपे क्षुत्पिपासानिवृत्ति । If the ear is self controlled in the *Anahata Dhvani*, *Dasanadas* (10 sounds) are heard

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।
आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥ २७ ॥

Some offer all the actions of the senses and of the vital energy as oblation in the fire of the yoga of self control, kindled and illumined by wisdom

NOTES

1 The five jnanendriyas the five karmendriyas and the five vital energies and Manas and Buddhi

form the Linga Sarira The homa of this in Nirodha Samadhi means the absorption of it in the Atman

2 Sri Ramanuja says मनश्च इन्द्रियप्रवणतानिवारणे प्रयतन्त इत्यर्थः ।

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥ २८ ॥

Some perform the sacrifice of wealth, some perform the sacrifice of austerity, others perform the austerity of Yoga, others perform the sacrifice of Vedic study, yet others perform the sacrifice of the investigation of the meaning of the Veda, others are practiced strivers who have perfected and fulfilled vows

Notes

1 द्रव्ययज्ञा —Those philanthropists who sink tanks wells, etc, and form flower gardens etc These acts of philanthrophy come under दत्त and पूर्त

वापीकूपतटाकादिदेवतायतनानि च ।
अन्नप्रदानमाराम पूर्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥
शरणागतसंत्राण भूतानां चाप्यहिंसनम् ।
बहिर्वेदि च यद्दान दत्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥

Sri Ramanuja says द्रव्ययज्ञाः न्यायतो द्रव्याण्युपादाय

देवतार्चने प्रयतन्ते। (They get wealth by proper means and use it to worship God)

2 तपोयज्ञाः—Chapter XVII verses 14 to 16 describe the tapas of body, speech and mind

3 योगयज्ञाः—This refers to the *Ashtanga Yoga*

4 संशितव्रता —Refers to what are called *Maha-vratas* in the Yoga Shastra The five *yamas* are ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, and aparigraha If these are practised at all times, in all places, and under all conditions they are called *Mahavratas* ते जातिदेशकालसमयानवच्छिन्ना सार्वभौमा महाव्रतम्। Only in this way can Kama, Krodha, Lobha, and Moha be triumphantly and finally overcome Sri Madhusoodana says

तत्राहिंसया क्षमया क्रोधस्य, ब्रह्मचर्येण वस्तुविचारेण कामस्य, अस्तेयापरिग्रहरूपेण सन्तोषेण लोभस्य, सत्येन यथार्थज्ञानरूपेण विवेकेन मोहस्य, तन्मूलानां सर्वेषां निवृत्तिरिति द्रष्टव्यम्।

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथाऽपरे।
प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः॥ २९॥

Others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming breath and the incoming breath in the outgoing breath, thus stopping the courses of the intaken and outgoing breaths and devoted to the performance of Pranayama

NOTES

1. This stanza refers to पूरक, रेचक, and कुम्भक

2 Patanjali says in Yoga sutras
तस्मिन्सति श्वासप्रश्वासयोर्गतिविच्छेदलक्षण. प्राणायाम. ।

3 The spiritual science of Pranayama is dealt with at greater length in Chapter VI of the Gita

4 Pranayama enables the yogi to regulate and control and restrain the flow of vital energy, leads to concentration of mind, and results in prolongation of life The transference of breathing from the realm of involuntary action to the realm of voluntary action is one of the most powerful means of enabling the mind to gain in steadiness and vision and power It leads to enfranchisement from desire and the self-direction of the mind towards God

अपरे नियताहारा: प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।
सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषा. ॥ ३० ॥

Others who take food in measure perform the sacrifice of Pranas in Pranas All these are knowers of sacrifice and are men whose sins have been destroyed by sacrifice.

NOTES

1 नियताहारा.—In Chapter VI of the Gita the Lord says that measure in food and sleep and work

and rest is essential to Yoga (See verse 16, 17) It is further said

द्वौ भागौ पूरयेदन्नैस्तोयेनैकं प्रपूरयेत् ।
मारुतस्य प्रचारार्थं चतुर्थमवशेषयेत् ॥

2 प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति—Sri Sankaracharya says that the transmutation of uncontrolled breath into controlled breath is itself described here as a *homa* or sacrifice

3 Nilakanta says that the above words refer to the लय of the senses in the mind (manas), of the manas in the *chitta* and of the *chitta* in the *ahamkara*

4 Madhusoodana says that the above refers to a fourth Pranayama or केवल कुम्भक i e, the attainment of suspended breath and *Samadhi* without going through रेचक or पूरक—in which all the Indriyas are controlled and are in a condition of लय

5 Sridhara quotes in this connection two beautiful verses

सकारेण बहिर्याति हकारेण विशेत्पुनः ।
प्राणास्तत्र स एवाहं हंस इत्यनुचिन्तयेत् ॥
यथा यथा सदाभ्यासान्मनसः स्थिरता भवेत् ।
वायुवाक्कायदृष्टीनां स्थिरता च तथा तथा ॥

6 The Sruti declares

यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ॥

7 Sri Madhavacharya quotes the following verse

यदस्यात्माशन तेन प्राणा प्राणेषु वै हुता ॥

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
नाय लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥३१॥

Those who partake of the ambrosial food which forms the sacrificial remains attains the Eternal Brahma Even this world is not for the non performer of yajna, how then th॰ other, O best of the Kuru line?

NOTES

1 The above said sacrifices lead to God through purity of mind (*chitta suddhi*)

2 Neelakanta thinks that the yajnas refer to the daily five *yajnas* (देवऋषिपितृभूतातिथियज्ञ)

3 अयं लोक —Sri Ramanujacharya well explains this as meaning this Prakrita loka with Dharma, Artha and Kama. The परलोक is Moksha. नायं लोकः न प्राकृतलोकः प्राकृतलोकसम्बन्धि धर्मार्थकामाख्य पुरुषार्थो न सिध्यति कुतः इतोऽन्यो मोक्षाख्यः पुरुषार्थः । परमपुरुषार्थतया मोक्षस्य प्रस्तुतत्वात्तदितरपुरुषार्थोऽयं लोक इति निर्दिश्यते — इह प्राकृतः ।

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥ ३२ ॥

Thus sacrifices of various forms are elaborated in the Vedas Know that all of them are the effects of action (physical, verbal, and mental) Knowing this, thou shalt attain liberation

NOTES

1 Sacrifices are thus the means and not the end or the goal The Atman is Eternal Peace and Love and Joy They lead to a realisation of the true nature of the Atman through Sattvajnana असङ्गो ह्ययं पुरुषः असङ्गो न हि सज्जते (Sruti)

2 In the Paisacha Bhashya by Hanuman it is well said एते यज्ञाः परमात्मनः प्रत्यक्तत्त्वावबोधनभूताः ।

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

O Parantapa, the sacrifice taking the form of wisdom is more auspicious than sacrifice of wealth and other material things All action in its entirety, O Partha, attains its fulfilment and consummation in wisdom

NOTES

1 Karmas lead to fruits wisdom is not causal but only revelatory

2 Sri Ramanujacharya thinks that in this verse the Jnana element in Karma Yoga is shown to be higher than the mere Karma element in it

3 True work is that which leads to worship and wisdom

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ ३४ ॥

Know thou this by prostrating thyself and by frequent questions and by service The wise who have realised the Truth will then impart wisdom to you

NOTES

1 Reverence, interrogation and service—all are required in the pupil In the teacher wisdom and realisation are required Else instruction has no fruitfulness उक्तज्ञानाद्भवेत्कार्यं नान्यैरिति हरेर्मतम् ॥

2 The pupil must interrogate about spiritual matters The whole framework of the *Kenopanishad* shows thus A beautiful Stanza says

कथं बन्धः कथं मोक्षः कस्य केन विमुच्यते ।
विद्याविद्ये कथं भूते कोऽहं दृश्यमिदं च किम् ॥

3. The Sruti says तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्समित्पाणि श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं ।

4. The quickening of truth in us can be caused only by soul acting on soul

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।
येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥ ३५ ॥

Having known that, you will not, O Pandava, again have any delusion as now By knowing that, you shall realise the entirety of creation in the Atman and then in Me

NOTES

1 This shows that only through the disciplines of wisdom can we attain self realisation and God-realisation Sri Sankaracharya says that this means self-realisation as identical with God Sri Ramanujacharya says that it means the realisation of the true nature of all souls and their similarity to God Identity is emphasised by the former, and equality by the latter Sri Ramanuja says that Jivas have ज्ञानाकारतया साम्य and भगवत्स्वरूपसाम्य Sri Sankara says that the verse refers to क्षेत्रज्ञेश्वरैकत्वम् ।

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्य सर्वेभ्य पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि ॥ ३६ ॥

Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, you can cross all sin with the raft of wisdom.

NOTES.

1. *Papa* (sin) includes all karmic bondage—the bondage of Dharma and Adharma Sri Sankaracharya says धर्मोऽपीह मुमुक्षोः पापमुच्यते ।

2 Wisdom is the supreme purifier and burns up all Karmic taint

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥ ३७ ॥

As the well lighted fire reduces all wood to ashes, even so does the fire of wisdom reduce all actions to ashes.

NOTES

1 Jnana burns up all *Sanchita* (acumulated and *Agami* (future) *karmas* *Prarabdha* (that fragment of our *karmic* sum total which has begun to bear fruit) alone must be worked out The Brahmasutras say

तदधिगम उत्तरपूर्वाघयोरश्लेषविनाशौ तद्व्यपदेशात् ।
इतरस्याप्येवमसंश्लेषः पाते तु । भोगेन त्वितरे क्षपयित्वा संपद्यते ।

2 The Sruti says

तस्य तावदेव चिरं यावन्न विमोक्ष्येऽथ संपत्स्ये ।

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥

तद्यथा पुष्करपलाश आपो न श्लिष्यन्त
एवमेवंविदि पाप कर्म न श्लिष्यते ।
तद्यथेषीकातूलमग्नौ प्रोत प्रदूयेत
एव हास्य सर्वे पाप्मान प्रदूयन्ते ॥

4 There are also *adhikari purushas* who as the result of *upasanas* are, though of attained wisdom, bound by the Eternal Will to the fulfilment and discharge of certain cosmic offices and functions "यावदधिकारमवस्थितिराधिकारिकाणा" (say the Brahma Sutras)

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥

Verily there is in this world nothing equal to wisdom as a purifier Therefore in due time he who is perfected in Yoga realises and attains It in the self

NOTES

1 By karma alone karma cannot be overcome.
कर्मणा कर्मनिर्हारो नैवात्यन्तिक इष्यते ।

Yogasamsiddha means perfected through karma yoga and samadhi yoga (Sri Sankaracharya) Sri Ramanujacharya thinks that it means karma yoga.

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥३९॥

The man who is full of faith, who is devoted to it, and who is of controlled senses attains wisdom, and having attained wisdom, he will attain soon the supreme peace

NOTES

1 अचिरेण i e soon This means 'at the end of Prarabdhakarma' (action which has begun to bear fruit)

2 As a light dispels darkness of its own power and not with other aid, so doth wisdom dispel karmic bondage

3 Faith is esential अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धव्य

4 Wisdom alone effects liberation The Sruti says

ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति पर ।
ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशै ।
ज्ञात्वा शिव शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ।
तमेवं विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति ।
य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ।

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ ४० ॥

The ignorant man, the man who has not faith, and the man who is full of doubt each of these goes to destruction, neither this world nor the next nor joy comes to the man of doubt

NOTES

1 The ignorant man can be easily saved, the man of unfaith can be saved with some difficulty, but the man of hopeless perversity of doubt is very difficult to save Neelakantha says well अज्ञः सुखेन त्वाकर्तुं शक्यः । अश्रद्दधानो यत्नेन, संशयात्मा त्वसाध्य एव ।

2 The doubting man is the agnostic He is generally a cynic, a misanthrope and a sufferer rolled into one He is a universal and unhesitating hesitator He will not trust even his friends and hence will not get the blessings of this world He will not trust Scripture and will not hence get the blessings of the other world He will not trust even his food and will lose all pleasure The man of ignorance and the man of unfaith will at least have this world and its pleasures though not the other world

3 Thus while he cannot get even धर्मार्थकाम, what chance is there of his attaining Moksha?

योगसन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ॥ ४१ ॥

O Dhananjaya, actions do not bind him who has attained renunciation of work through Yoga, who has destroyed doubt through wisdom, and who is ever vigilant

NOTES

1 योगसन्यस्तकर्मं—Who has come out of the bondage of Karma by making work a love offering to God realising the Truth about eternal and non-eternal things

2 There is nothing higher than Self-Realisation The Sruti says आत्मलाभान्न परं विद्यते ।

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥ ४२ ॥

Therefore, cleaving asunder with the sword of wisdom the doubt born of ignorance and seated in the heart, be established in Yoga Arise O Bharata

NOTES

1 The simile is a military simile It is addressed to a warrior The clarion call to him at the end is, arise and march O Soldier of God, under His Divine command

2 *Arise*—Arise and take up thy duty in the true *Karmayogi's* spirit. Thy present duty is to fight.

CHAPTER IV

General Concluding Remarks.

1. The fourth chapter of the Gita is called ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोग In it the Lord tells us the secret of *avataras*, the innermost truths of Karma yoga, the various forms of Karma yoga, the need for knowledge, faith, and self control, and the supreme power of *jnana* (wisdom). Yamunacharya s Gitarthasangraha says well

प्रसङ्गात्स्वस्वभावोक्ति कर्मणोऽकर्मताऽस्य च ।
भेदाज्ञानस्य माहात्म्य चतुर्थोध्याय उच्यते ॥

2 Sri Madhusoodana says

स्वस्थानीशत्वबाधेन भक्तिश्रद्धे दृढीकृते ।
धीहेतु कर्मनिष्ठा च ज्ञानिनोपसंहृता ॥

Thus ends the Chapter
Karma Brahmarpana Yoga

CHAPTER V

Karma Sannyasa Yoga.

Preliminary Observations

1 As the Lord has taught both Karma Yoga and Karma Sanyasa Arjuna asks which is the better of the two and with that question the fifth chapter begins

2 Till now Karma yoga was taught and explained The Lord is going to show that it is the best means of spiritual realisation Till renunciation is attained in full work must be done in the spirit of the true *Karma y qı* When the spirit of renunciation comes to steady and perfect it a man may give up works and devote all time to *Samadhi yoga* We must not prematurely take up the latter or waver between the two Madbusoodana says

तस्मादादौ भगवदर्पणबुद्ध्या निष्कामकर्मानुष्ठानादन्तःकरणशुद्धौ तीव्रेण वैराग्येण विविदिषायां दृढायां सर्वकर्मसंन्यासः श्रवणमननादिरूपवेदान्तवाक्यविचाराय कर्तव्य इति भगवता मतम् ।

3 A beautiful stanza says

कषायपक्तिः कर्मभ्यो ज्ञानं तु परमा गतिः ।
कषाये कर्मभिः पक्वे ततो ज्ञानं प्रवर्तते ॥

The Vartikakara says

प्रत्याम्नातपारिव्रज्यं वेदानुवचनादय ।
ब्रह्मचार्यं तु तस्यामपीप्सन्तीति श्रुतबलात् ॥

The Sruti says about renunciation —

ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य गृही भवेद्गृही भूत्वा प्रव्रजेद्यदि वेतरथा ब्रह्मचर्यादेव प्रव्रजेद्गृहाद्वा वनाद्वा यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत् ।

4 Sri Ramanujacharya develops his doctrine thus In the 3rd chapter Karma yoga was taught In the 4th chapter the superiority of the jnana element in Karma yoga was stressed In this chapter the importance of jnananishtha in Karma yoga for leading to a realisation of the true nature of the jiva (as apart from God) is shown He says

चतुर्थेऽध्याये कर्मयोगस्य ज्ञानाकारतापूर्वकस्वरूपभेदो ज्ञानांशस्य च प्राधान्यमुक्तम् । ज्ञानयोगाधिकारिणोऽपि कर्मयोगस्यान्तर्गतज्ञानत्वादप्रमादत्वात्सुकरत्वान्निरपेक्षत्वाच्च ज्यायस्त्वं तृतीय एवोक्तम् । इदानीं कर्मयोगस्यात्मप्राप्तिसाधनत्वे ज्ञाननिष्ठायाः शैघ्र्यं कर्मयोगान्तर्गताकर्तृत्वानुसन्धानप्रकारं च प्रतिपाद्य तन्मूलं ज्ञानं च विशोध्यते ।

5 Sri Madhvacharya says that this chapter develops the Karma yoga taught in Chapter III

तृतीयाध्यायेनोक्तमेव कर्मयोगं प्रपञ्चयत्यनेनाध्यायेन ।

6 This chapter is called कर्मसंन्यासयोग ।

7 It seems to me that the central truth is that Karma yoga should be performed with an increas-

ing realisation of the Eternal Truth, till at last the realisation remains and work falls off, just as in a tree the blossom shines forth till at last the fruit appears and the blossom is shed न कर्माणि त्यजेयागी कर्मभिस्त्यज्यते ह्यसौ । We must not be carried away by technical differences of doctrine Making allowance for the verbal differences we must see the real and essential oneness of doctrine and accept it and act on it

अर्जुन उवाच—

सन्यास कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योग च शंससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेक तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥ १ ॥

Arjuna said

Thou praisest renunciation of action as well as the performance of action, O Krishna Tell me decisively which is the more auspicious of the two.

NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya points out that the choice is as between कर्मयोग and कर्मसन्यास in the case of one who has not attained realisation In the case of him who has attained realisation there is no scope for Karma as he has attained cosmic consciousness

2 कृष्ण He is so called because he is पापकर्षण, भक्तदुःखकर्षण, सदानन्दरूप । (the destroyer of sins and sorrows and the giver of bliss)

यत कर्यसि देवश नियम्य सकल जगत् ।
अतो वदन्ति मुनयः कृष्ण त्वां ब्रह्मवादिन ॥

3 It is not necessary or possible to go into the bewildering discussions of doctrine imported into this verse

4 The Lord's expressed doctrine is clear enough Karma Yoga has the element of Sanyasa or renunciation (अन्तर्गर्भितसन्यास) which in the course of time will lead to the dropping off of action and the fruitage of realisation Work with renunciation of the fruits of work is better than renunciation of work—as the former preserves the kernel of renunciation in the shell of work but the latter may lead to the loss of both renunciation and work But if a man is strong-willed enough to control his mind and use all his time in study and meditation he may do so by all means If ordinary Ramadutas could not jump across the ocean and had to go by the bridge, we cannot forbid Hanuman from jumping across the ocean The Brahma Purana says

सन्यासे तु तुरीये वै प्रीतिर्मम गरीयसी ।
येषामत्राधिकारो न तेषां कर्मेति निश्चय ॥

5 The choice in this verse is thus between कर्मयोग and विविदिषासन्यास The Lord says as already stated

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च सन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

सन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥ २ ।

The Blessed Bhagavan said

Sannyasa (renunciation of action) and Karma Yoga both lead to bliss But of the two Karma Yoga is better than Karma Sannyasa

NOTES

1 The Lord has made himself quite clear here and I fail to see how there can be any possible controversy about His meaning कर्मयोग leads easily through *chittasuddhi* to *jnana* and to *Moksha*

2 Karmayoga has got in its favour सौकर्य (its being easy), शैघ्र्य (its being quick in fructification) and अनपाय (its not being dangerous)

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

He (the Karmayogi) should be known as the *Nitya Sannyasi* (the perpetual renouncer) who does not hate or desire, for he is free from

the *dvandvas* (the pairs of opposites), O mighty armed ! and is easily set free from bondage.

NOTES:

1. The true Karma *Yogi* is better than the unfit or false *Sannyasi*. But the true Karma Yogi and the true Sannyasi have and reach the same goal. Even as between them the former has an easier and quicker and less dangerous path.

2 The *dvandvas* i.e., heat and cold, joy and pain etc.

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।
एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥ ४ ॥

Children, not sages, called *Samkhya* and *Yoga* as separate and diverse. If one is rooted in either, he gets the fruit of both.

NOTES:

1. How can any one have doubts or disputes after such a declaration? There is फलैकत्व (sameness of result).

2. Nilakanta says that this verse dispels the following doubt: In Karma Sanyasa there is fear of defection (पाताशङ्का) and in Karma Yoga there is the burden of work (कर्मश्रमः). Which is the better of the two? The Lord says that both have the same fruit.

3 The फल is stated by Sri Ramanujacharya as *Atmavalokana* (realisation of the Self).

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।
एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ५ ॥

The attainment reached by the *Samkhyas* is reached by the *Yogins* as well. He sees well who sees *Samkhya* and *Yoga* as one

NOTES

1 The same idea is elaborated in this verse

2 Karma Yoga leads to ज्ञाननिष्ठा It has been well said यान्यतोऽन्यानि जन्मानि तेषु नूनं कृतं भवेत् ।
सत्कृत्य पुरुषेणेह नान्यथा ब्रह्मणि स्थितिः ॥

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ६ ॥

Renunciation of work, O mighty-armed! is difficult to attain without Yoga The man of Yoga who is full of devotion attains Brahman soon.

NOTES

1 योगयुक्त Sri Sankaracharya thus explains its meaning well वैदिकेन कर्मयोगेनेश्वरसमर्पितेन फलनिरपेक्षेण युक्तः (Having the scriptural Karma Yoga, dedicated to God and unexpectant of fruits).

2 The Sruti says शान्तो दान्त उपरतस्तितिक्षुः समाहितो भूत्वात्मन्येवात्मानं पश्यति ।

3. The following verses thus describe well this *Sadhana*.

पिण्डीकृत्येन्द्रियग्रामं बुद्धावारोप्य निश्चलम् ।
विषयाध्वस्मृतीस्त्यक्त्वा तिष्ठेच्चिदनुरोधतः ॥
एषोऽभ्युपायः सर्वत्र वेदान्तेषु प्रतिष्ठितः ।
तत्त्वमस्यादिवाक्यार्थज्ञानोत्पत्त्यर्थमादरात् ॥

4. If an unfit man prematurely performs कर्मसंन्यास he becomes कर्मब्रह्मोभयभ्रष्ट *i.e.*, one who has lapsed from Karma and Brahma Hence Karma Yoga is the easier and surer and better path.

5. The real question is, what is the force of the वैराग्य? Do you feel such *Vairagya* that during all waking moments you are prepared to spend all your time—till death arrives—in study and meditation? Then the path of विविदिषाकर्मसंन्यास may be taken. Yet pause and hesitate before you take the plunge. The path is difficult. The path of Karma Yoga has got a real and growing element of *Sannyasa* and is the easier and surer path and leads to the same goal. Venkatanatha, the author of Brahmanandagiri, says: 'तदेतादृशे तीव्रतरे वैराग्ये संन्यासः, तदभावे कर्मयोग इति व्यवस्थासंभवान्न कोऽपि विरोधः ॥

6. Sri Ramanujacharya says that संन्यास means Jnana Yoga and that Karma Yoga is better and easier and surer than Jnana Yoga in leading us

to Atmasakshatkara (Self-realisation) According to him it is after this that Bhakti leads us to Bhagavatsakshatkara (God realisation)

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥ ७ ।

He who has attained Yoga, whose mind is pure, who has conquered his body and his senses, and whose self has become the self of all creation is unaffected though he is doing work.

NOTES

1 The conquest of the body, the senses and the mind is thus described by Manu

वाग्दण्डोऽथ मनोदण्ड कायदण्डस्तथैव च ।
यस्यैते नियता दण्डा स त्रिदण्डीति कथ्यते ॥

2 He is not affected by Karma as he does work only for *Lokasangraha*

3 सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा Sri Sankaracharya says that this refers to the identity of souls, Sri Ramanujacharya says that this refers to the equality of souls (as all souls are equal in jnana, only the material bodies being different), Sri Madhvacharya finds herein the similarity of souls as servants or images of God, though souls are diverse and unequal This is the only and fundamental difference

between the three schools of thought They agree in the *Sadhanas* and in Atma being Sachchidananda and immaterial and eternal. The solution of the abovesaid only difference is only by each seeing for himself the fact at the end of the common road I do not propose to discuss the relative merits and demerits of these diverse and different views They have been discussed for centuries and they will be discussed for centuries more The common road is untrod and we only get into lanes and discuss the goal in excited groups. I do not propose to go into that question

नैव किंचित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।
पश्यञ्शृण्वन्स्पृशञ्जिघ्रन्नश्नन्गच्छन्स्वपञ्श्वसन् ॥ ८ ॥

प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥ ९ ॥

The knower of truth must think with his calm and composed mind that he is not himself engaged in any activity—whether seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, discharging, receiving, opening and closing the eyes,—realising that (in these acts) the senses are moving among the sense objects

NOTES:

1. The Advaita school says that this is because the soul is not an actor but is Sachchidananda. The Dvaita school says that this is because the true doer as God and man must give up his false idea of independent volition.

2. The Lord has summed up in this verse the work of the five *Jnanendriyas* and the five *Karmendriyas*.

The soul is not the actor and director in respect of either voluntary or involuntary or reflex actions in the body. By mere mental *adhyasa* it has imposed on itself the idea of being a doer in regard to the voluntary actions alone. The true seer will have the same attitude towards voluntary actions as we have towards involuntary and reflex actions.

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥ १० ॥

He who performs actions, surrendering them unto God and giving up attachment, is untouched and untainted by sin just as a lotus leaf is unaffected by the water.

NOTES:

1. "Brahma" in this stanza is taken by Sri

Sankaracharya and Sri Madhvacharya as meaning God Sri Ramanujacharya takes it as meaning Prakriti As everything emanates from Brahman, Prakriti being only the primary emanation or *sakti*, this process of realising our detachedness and our true nature and realising that the sense-actions are really not a portion of our very Self is the same whether we regard them as the effect of Prakriti (a nearer cause) or as the result of God's *sankalpa* (the ultimate cause)

2. The previous two verses refer to the *Jnana yoga* This verse refers to the *Karma yoga*

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ ११ ॥

The (karma) yogins perform action—renouncing attachment and for the sake of mental purity—with their body and mind and senses which are freed from the sense of possession and pleasure and full of the sense of surrender of all fruits to God.

NOTES

1 The word केवल has been explained above by a long phrase to bring out its full force as pointed out by Sri Sankaracharya

2 The purified mind, as pointed out in the Bhashyotkarsha Deepika, will rejoice in meditation and selfless aid to others. The purified ears will rejoice in hearing about His love and His blessed actions for the good of humanity The purified tongue will take what had been offered in His worship. The purified nose will rejoice in the smell of flowers placed in worship at His lotus feet The purified skin will rejoice in His divinest streams The purified feet will seek His shrines. The purified hands will worship Him The purified tongue will utter in gladness His praise and sing His glory

3 Such holy actions bless not only the doer but also those who follow or applaud them or merely report them or look on them

धर्मः श्रुतो वा दृष्टो वा कथितो वा कृतोऽपि वा ।
अनुमोदितो वा राजेन्द्र पुनाति पुरुषं सदा ॥

(Mahabharata Asvamedha parva, chapter 94 verse 29)

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ १२ ॥

The dedicator of fruits of actions to God by giving up such fruits attains the peace born of such steadfastness (of karma yoga) The man

of unpoised mind is bound, because of its acting under desire and of its attachment to fruits

NOTES

1 The diversity of results of actions is due to the diversity of mental attitudes

2 Sri Ramanujacharya takes the goal indicated by these verses to be the realisation of Jiva According to him as pointed out already, the Gita leaves the soul, at the end of the VIth chapter in a state of the realisation of the self attained by Karma yoga and Jnana yoga and then teaches the fitted soul the bliss of Bhakti yoga

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा सन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥ १३ ॥

Renouncing mentally all actions, the man of controlled senses dwells, neither doing nor directing action—in the city of the nine gates

NOTES

1 The city of the nine gates is the body which has nine openings Neelakanta says that the nine gates are the five *Jnanendriyas*, *Prana*, *Buddhi*, *Ahankara*, *and Chitta*

2. Sri Sankaracharya says that after pointing out that to one who has not attained perfect mental

self-poise and purity the path of Karma Yoga is far better than the path of premature Karma Sannyasa (Vividisha Sannyasa), the Lord declares here that the man of attained self-poise and purity will be a *Jnananishtha* and rooted in *Vidvat Sannyasa.*

3 The other schools—especially the Dvaita school—say that what is taught is not the renunciation of action but the renunciation of passion

4 सर्वकर्माणि means all actions including Nitya, Naimittika, Kamya, and *Pratishiddha*

5 Sri Ramanujacharya says well आत्मन प्राचीनकर्ममूलदेहसम्बन्धप्रयुक्तमिदं कर्मणां कर्तृत्व न स्वरूपप्रयुक्तम् ।

न कर्तृत्व न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ १४ ॥

The Lord does not, in the case of beings, create doership or action or union with the fruit of action This is done by Svabhava

NOTES

1 Sri Ramanujacharya takes प्रभु as meaning *jiva*—consistently with his interpretation of Chapter I to VI as pointed out already

2 *svabhava* This is a word about which controversy has raged Sri Sankaracharya takes it to mean Avidya or Maya or Prakriti Sri Rama

nujacharya takes it to mean as the sum total of *Vasanas*. Sri Madhvacharya takes it to mean God.

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ १५ ॥

The Lord doth not accept the good or the evil deeds of any person. Knowledge is veiled by ignorance and hence the mortals are deluded by ignorance.

NOTES

1 The Lord is *avaptasamastakama* (perfection of bliss) and cannot be affected by the actions of created beings. These actions are in proportion to the predominance of ignorance or vision

2 Sri Ramanujacharya takes प्रभु to mean jiva. Then the verse would mean that the jiva is in all bodies but is unaffected by good or bad actions which are proportioned to the mental states. He takes *ajnana* to mean Vasanas.

3 जन्तव. So called as they are जननशीला (given to successive births).

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ १६ ॥

But in the case of those in whom such ig-

norance has been destroyed by jnana (knowledge) —their knowledge, like the Sun, reveals the Supreme.

NOTES

1 The word "Atmanah" is in the singular number It cannot be made the foundation for a discussion about the soul being one or many But somehow that discussion is dragged in by some commentators Sri Madhvacharya takes "Atmanah" to mean God and to relate to ज्ञान So according to him आत्मन ज्ञानेन could be by the knowledge of God

2 Another discussion is about *avidya* being भावरूप (positive) or अभावरूप (negative)

3 Another discussion is whether jnana itself gives salvation or whether grace is necessary In fact, even jnana is due to grace He who is able to say that the final factor is only this or that or something else would indeed be a bold man In my view these discussions do not really arise under this verse, though they may arise elsewhere

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥ १७ ॥

Those whose minds have reached the supreme knowledge, whose self is the Supreme,

who are rooted in the Supreme, and to whom the Supreme is the highest attainment—they go to the abode whence there is no return, their sins having been destroyed by *jnana* (wisdom or realisation)

NOTES

1 Between *Sravana* (study) and *Sakshatkara* (realisation) we have the indispensable and vital steps—*manana* and *Nididhyasana* (concentrated thought and meditation)

2 The four words तद्बुद्धय etc, mean four different and successive stages of attainment

3 Sri Ramanuja consistently with his exposition of Chapters I to VI, says that this verse describes the realisation of the nature of the soul (as different from the Oversoul)

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥ १८ ॥

The knowers of the Self look with an equal eye on a Brahmana endowed with wisdom and tranquillity, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a *chandala*

NOTES

1 The above instances are given as illustrations of sattva, rajas and tamas

2. Sri Desikar says that *Vidya vinaya sampanna* does not qualify *Brahmana* but refers to a separate group while *Brahmana* refers to one who is a Brahmin by birth.

3. The main idea is that the man of realisation beholds God in all

4. Sri Ramanuja says that diversity is in prakriti but not in the souls which have *samya* (likeness).

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥ १९ ॥

Even here is *samsara* (the cycle of births and deaths) overthrown by those whose minds are rooted in this sameness. Brahman is without any imperfection and is the same in all. Therefore they rest in Brahman.

NOTES:

1. God is the all and the All-in-All.

2. His Love sustains and pervades and controls everything.

3. He is untouched by the imperfections of the manifested phenomena. The Sruti says:

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ॥

(Just as the sun, who is the eye of the universe is untainted by outside imperfections, even so is the universal Soul untainted by the griefs of the world).

4. The rule in Gautama Smriti: "समा समाभ्यां विषमसमे पूजातः," which condemns equal reverence to the unequal and unequal reverence to the equal has no application to the seer of attained God-realisation who sees God in all

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।
स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥ २० ॥

He whose mind is firm, who is without delusion, and who knows Brahman and rests in Brahman will not rejoice at attaining what is pleasant or grieve at receiving what is painful.

NOTES:

1. The keynote of realisation is in the words *Viveka* and *vairagya* (wisdom and dispassion.)

बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते ॥ २१ ॥

He whose mind is not attached to external objects attains the joy of the soul. He, with his mind bound in union with Brahma, enjoys eternal and infinite bliss.

NOTES

1 Though one has been enjoying pleasures born of sense-contacts during many births yet renunciation will lead to a higher bliss

यच्च कामसुखं लोके यच्च दिव्यं महत्सुखम् ।
तृष्णाक्षयसमुत्थस्य नार्हत षोडशीं कलाम् ॥

The man of consummated Viveka and Vairagya attains the joy of the soul which is the joy of the union of the soul and the Oversoul

3 Neelakanta says that Samadhi is like and unlike sleep—like, because we have the bliss of ऐक्य (oneness) in both and unlike, because in the latter *avidya* (nescience) exists and the bliss is hence transient and interrupted while in the former avidya is destroyed and the bliss is eternal and perfect

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ २२ ॥

All enjoyments that are contact born are verily sources of pain. They have further a beginning and an end, O Kaunteya. Therefore the wise man rejoiceth not in them.

NOTES

1 The bliss of God-love and God realisation is

eternal and perfect The pleasures of the senses are brief and imperfect and lead to satiety and pain

2 In all our pursuits of pleasure we have the pain of acquisition the pain of conservation, the pain of decay and loss, the inevitable satiety, and the certainty that pleasure is bought at somebody else's pain Further, all pleasures have a beginning and an end As Gaudapadacharya says

आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ।

Such transiency is essential non-existence Further, sense pleasures often leave a craving which outlives the capacity to acquire or even to enjoy

3 All pleasures in earth or heaven are only pain to the seeker after the bliss of God realisation Just as the eye is so delicate that what seems a gentle touch to the body is a rough and painful thing to it even so the God-lover who is the eye of the universe finds even the touch of sense pleasures in heaven an agonising pain

4 The Yoga Bhashyakara here says well

सर्वस्य द्वेषानुविद्धश्चेतनाचेतनसाधनाधीनस्तापानुभव ॥

5 I may refer here to the wonderful Yoga sutras which have analysed the sources of sorrow

अविद्यास्मिता रागद्वेषाभिनिवेशा पञ्चक्लेशा ।

अविद्याक्षेत्रमुत्तरेषां प्रसुप्ततनुविच्छिन्नोदाराणाम् ॥

6. The Vishnu Purana says well

यावतः कुरुते जन्तु सबन्धान्मनस प्रियान् ।
तावन्तोऽस्य निखन्यन्ते हृदये शोकशङ्कव ॥

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ २३ ॥

That man who, even before his liberation from the body, can withstand and endure here on earth the force of lust and anger, is the man of *yoga*, the man of happiness.

NOTES

1 This self-control is due to a perception of the nature of the soul and the nature of the non soul and leads to self-realisation.

2 Human life on earth is the place to learn this power of self-control which leads to the bliss of self-realisation

3 The Yoga Vasishtha says well

प्राणे गते यथा देहः सुखदुःखं न विन्दति ।
तथा चेत्प्राणयुक्तोऽपि स कैवल्याश्रमे वसेत् ॥

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥

The yogi full of inner happiness, inner

amusement, and inner illumination, having attained God, attains the Bliss Divine

Notes

1 ब्रह्मभूत The monistic school treats this as meaning having become one with Brahman Sri Madhva treats it as meaning one who is in Brahma (ब्रह्मणि भूतः)

2 Sri Ramanujacharya, consistently with his general interpretation of Chapters I to VI of the Gita, says that Brahmanirvana means the joy of realising the *jiva* (Atmanubhava sukham)

3 The difference between सुख and आराम is well brought out in the following verse in *Narada Purana*

दर्शनस्पर्शसंभाषाद्यत्सुखं जायते नृणाम् ।
आराम स तु विज्ञेय सुख कामक्षयोदितम् ॥

4 This verse gives us a glimpse into the joy of the self delighted and self illumined *yogi*

5 The Yoga Vasishta says well

न केवल जगद्भावस्तत्त्वज्ञ रञ्जयन्त्यमी ।
नागर नागरीकान्त कुग्रामललना इव ॥

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषय: क्षीणकल्मषा. ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मान सर्वभूतहिते रता. ॥ २५ ॥

The sages, with sins destroyed, with doubts dispelled, with senses controlled and with love for the good of all creatures attain the Bliss Divine

NOTES

1 The Self is the Self of All and is the object of supreme love and affection and adoration The love of the men of right vision and renunciation flows out to all beings as they see the innermost unity of the Self of all "तदेतत्प्रय. पुत्रात्प्रेयो वित्तात्प्रयो ऽन्यस्मात्सर्वस्मादन्तरतर यदयमात्मा"—says the Sruti

2 Madhusoodana says that the sages attain freedm from sin by means of यज्ञ etc, abilty to realise the soul by means of purity of mind, victory over doubt by *Śravana* and *Manana* (hearing and thinking), steadfastness by *Nididhyasana* (meditation) and love of all by God realisation

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥ २६ ॥

The Bliss Divine, both here and hereafter, is to those who are released from lust and anger, to the men of renunciation, to the men of controlled minds and to the men of realised Atman

NOTES

1 अभितः is interpreted by Sri Sankaracharya as-

meaning here and hereafter to show that a man may attain *Jivanmukti* even here, अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते. The other schools deny this Sri Madhvacharya explains it as meaning always and everywhere and says that a man of realisation can see God everywhere and at all times.

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥२७॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥ २८ ॥

Shutting out all external contacts, with his gaze fixed between the eyebrows, making the outgoing and ingoing breaths equal and moving within the nostrils, with senses, mind and buddhi under control, with liberation as his supreme goal, freed from desire and fear and anger,—such a man of meditation is verily free for ever.

NOTES:

1 These two verses form the kernel (सूत्रस्थानीय) of Chapter VI.

2. Viveka, Vairagya, and Dhyana lead to Moksha.

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥२९॥

Having known Me who am the Enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, who am the Supreme Ruler of all the worlds, who am the Loving Friend of all beings, he attains peace

NOTES

1 Sri Ramanujacharya says that the sage will do karmayoga as भगवदाराधन । सुहृद आराधनाय हि सर्वे प्रयतन्ते ।

2 I cannot better conclude my notes on this chapter than by quoting the magnificent description of Bhagavan by Sri Sankaracharya in his Bhashya on this verse

भोक्तार यज्ञानां तपसां च कर्तृरूपेण देवतारूपेण च सर्वलोकमहेश्वर सर्वेषां लोकानां महान्तमीश्वर सुहृद सर्वभूतानां सर्वप्राणिनां प्रत्युपकारनिरपेक्षतयोपकारिणं सर्वभूतानां हृदयेशय सर्वकर्मफलाध्यक्ष सर्वप्रत्ययसाक्षिण मां नारायण ज्ञात्वा शान्ति सर्वसंसारोपरतिमृच्छति प्राप्नोतीति ।

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1 As already stated by me at the beginning of this Chapter, this Chapter deals with Karmasannyasayoga

2 It is well summed up thus in Sri Yamunacharya's Gitarthasangraha

कर्मयोगस्य सौकर्यं शैघ्र्यं काश्चन तद्विधाः ।
ब्रह्मज्ञानप्रकारश्च पञ्चमाध्याय उच्यते ॥

The Lord teaches in this Chapter that wonderfull secret of dispassion and renunciation by which the ultimate bliss of wisdom and God-realisation is reached. He asks us to give up the foolish notion that the path of selfless work is different from that of self-renounced action Both, if resolutely pursued, lead to the same result But the former is easier than the latter. The goal is the bliss of god love and God-realisation As the last verse in the Chapter says:

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥

Thus ends the Chapter

KARMA SANNYASA YOGA

CHAPTER VI

Atmasamyama Yoga.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

1 This Chapter is called the आत्मसंयमयोगाध्याय. It deals primarily with Rajayoga culminating in Dhyana, Dharana, and Samadhi

2 The 5th Chapter has shown to us that the path of Karma Yoga is easier than the too-early adopted path of *Vividisha Sannyasa* This Chapter gives us the luminous means by which the self-realisation towards which we strive by means of the discipline of work (Karma Yoga) can be perfected Without the help of *Yoga*, we cannot attain a realisation of the true being of soul and God Without it we cannot attain the highest bliss of Bhakti or Jnana Without it the bhakti that we have is but a shadow of the Para bhakti Without it the jnana that we attain is but a shadow of the supreme jnana The Yoga Chudamanyupanishad says

यत्समाधौ परं ज्योतिरनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ।
तस्मिन्दृष्टे क्रियाकर्म यातायातो न विद्यते ॥

3 Sri Sankaracharya points out in his introduction that this chapter is an exposition of the sutra like verse No 27 in Chapter V (स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यान्) and that the Lord teaches us that Karma is the *Bahiranga* (outer instrument) of Dhyana Yoga and finds its fulfilment in Dhyana

4 Sri Ramanujacharya says, pursuing his own line of thought, that Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga, perfected by Raja Yoga leads to the realisation of the Atman Such Atman so freed from Gunasanga (samsaric state) has an inevitable and irresistible and eternal flow of love towards God (Bhakti) which is the means by which there comes an inevitable and irresistible and eternal flow from God of Grace and Bliss which is Moksha

5 Sri Madhvacharya says that in this chapter we are taught the Samadhi Yoga which is the innermost and most efficient means of Yoga ज्ञानान्तरङ्ग समाधियोगमाहानेनाध्यायेन

6 Thus the net result of all these teachings and expositions is that the practice of Raja Yoga with all eight angas is the means by which the seed of Karma Yoga becomes transformed into the celestial blossom of Bhakti Yoga and the ambrosial fruit of paradise of Jnana Yoga

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अनाश्रित कर्मफल कार्यं कर्म करोति य. ।
स सन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रिय· ॥

The Lord said —

He who performs his bounden duty without desiring the fruit of action—he is the true renouncer of action and the true doer of action, not he who has given up the fire (in which Srauta Karma has to be performed) and the rites (which have to be performed according to the Smritis)

NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya points out that this stanza really implies that a Karmayogin has to perform Karma Yoga till by purity of mind he attains Dhyana Yoga

2 If a man gives up his Vedic rites, tapas dana etc, and poses as a jnani, that by itself can not make him a true sannyasin What is required is renunciation of desire It is not proper that a man should consciously and prematurely renounce action But when the fulfilled renunciation of desire is complete renunciation of action will come in the form of Dhyana Yoga and Jnana Yoga Then freed from Gunasanga (attachment to gunas) the soul rests in its own glory

3. Another exposition is that we must not regard him as a *sannyasi* (ascetic) who has given up his *rites* or him as a *yogin* who is motionless and who does nothing. The true ascetic and yogin is he who does his duty free from desire.

4. According to the Advaita school Karma yoga leads to chitta suddhi. Only then sravana manana and nididhyasana bear fruit. *Nididhyasana* (which is really Dhyana yoga) leads to jnana and *sakshatkara* (realisation.) Sri Ramanujacharya says that a Karma yogin who does work free from desire has really both Karma yoga and Jnana yoga, the combination of which leads to *Atmavalokana* (realisation of the soul) and that hence Karma yoga is better than mere renunciation by Jnana yoga. Difference of terminology apart, I am of opinion that the main idea of all the schools is that perfected Karma yoga leads to perfected Dhyana yoga which leads to bliss.

5. Sankarananda says well about this verse:

अतो मुमुक्षोरवश्यं वैदिकं कर्म नियमेन श्रद्धया चेश्वरभक्त्या च कर्तव्यमिति सूचयितुं कर्मयोगिनं तदीयकर्मयोगं च स्तोतुं श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

यं सन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ २ ॥

What has been called as *sannyasa*, know O

Pandava, yoga to be that (true Sannyasa), because no one who has not renounced desire becomes a yogi

Notes

1 The innermost element of Sannyasa—unagitatedness by desire—is present in Karma yoga in the form of unagitatedness of desire of fruit of action

2 Sri Sankaracharya explains *sankalpa* as—
फलविषयसंकल्पोऽभिसंधिः फलसंकल्पस्य चित्तविक्षेपहेतुत्वात् ।

3 "निःसंकल्पतयास्तिष्ठेदेतन्मोक्षलक्षणम्" says Maitrayaniyopanishad

4 Sri Madhusoodana says well
यागं फलतृष्णाकर्तृत्वाभिमानयोः परित्यागेन विहितकर्मानुष्ठानं तं संन्यासं विद्धि ।

5 Sri Ramanujacharya takes संकल्प to mean the ignorance which thinks *anatma* to be *atma*
आत्मयाथात्म्यानुसंधानेन अनात्मनि प्रकृतावात्मसंकल्पः संन्यस्तः परित्यक्तो येन स संन्यस्तसंकल्पः ।

6 Sri Madhvacharya says well
कामसंकल्पाद्यपरित्यागे कथमुपायवान्स्यादित्याशयः ।

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

To the sage desirous of climbing up unto Dhyana yoga, action is said to be the means To the very same man who has attained such Dhyana yoga, renunciation of action is the cause (of perfected Dhyana yoga)

NOTES

1 Though a lot of controversy has been raised about the view of Sri Sankaracharya on this verse it is more based on imaginary data than on real data His meaning is that when the discipline of desireless duty has borne the fruit of Dhyana yoga, such Dhyana uninterrupted by action is the best means of perfecting such Dhyana yoga He says यावद्यावत्कर्मभ्य उपरमते तावत्तावन्निरायासस्य जितेन्द्रियस्य चित्तं समाधीयते, तथा सति स झटिति योगारूढो भवति

He quotes the following great verse from Vyasa

नैतादृशं ब्राह्मणस्यास्ति वित्तं
यथैकता समता सत्यता च ।
शीलं स्थितिर्दण्डनिधानमार्जवं
ततस्ततश्चोपरमः क्रियाभ्यः ॥

2 Sridhara clinches the whole discussion by saying तस्यैव योगारूढस्य योगाभ्यासानुष्ठानं प्रवृत्तस्य विक्षेपासहस्य यो-
मारोहे कर्मणा शमः संन्यासः कारणमुच्यते । न हि कर्मसु व्यापृतो अ-
नन्यचिन्ततया योगमनुष्ठातुमीष्टे ।

3 Such yearning for Dhyanayoga undisturbed by any other thought or word or action and yearning for fulfilment through uninterrupted development can come only to a few highly evolved souls whose discipline by *Karma yoga* has been perfected They will go on rooted more and more in *Dhyana* During the intervals between dhyana they will do duty for *Lokasangraha* but their increasing tendency will be towards increasingly prolonged *dhyana*.

4 As Nilakantha says well that just as a very hungry man gives up all action to satisfy his hunger, even so does the man hungry for divine union give up all action for that supreme attainment यथा तीव्रबुभुक्षयोपेतोऽन्यत्र नीरागो व्यासङ्गान्तरं त्यक्त्वा भोजनारूढएव भवति तथा तीव्रारुरुक्षावान् सर्वत्र वीतरागस्त्यक्तसर्वकर्मा योगारूढ एव भवति ।

5 Sri Ramanujacharya says यावदात्मावलोकनरूपमोक्षावाप्तिकर्मकार्यमित्यर्थं ।

6 Sri Madhvacharya has given us very beautiful and uplifting ideas on this verse He says that योगमारुरुक्षो means उपायसंपूर्तिमिच्छोः, and योगारूढस्य means संपूर्णोपायस्य and अपरोक्षज्ञानिनः—कारणं means परमसुखकारणं तस्य सर्वोपशमेन समाधिरेव कारणं प्राधान्येन He then says यद्यपि यदा भावस्योपरमस्तदैव सम्यक्संप्रज्ञातसमाधिर्जायते ।

अन्यदा तु भगवच्चरितादौ स्थितिः। He quotes the following fine stanzas

ये त्वां पश्यन्ति भगवंस्त एव सुखिनः परम्।
तेषामेव तु सम्यक् च समाधिर्जायते नृणाम्॥
मोक्षव्यकर्मण्यक्षीणे जपेन कथयापि वा।
वर्तयन्ति महात्मानस्त्वद्भक्तास्त्वत्परायणाः॥

7. Hence कर्मयोग leads to ध्यानयोग, and ध्यानयोग coupled with कर्मसन्न्यास leads to the perfection of ध्यानयोग It is only on this interpretation that we can explain the doubt of Arjuna and the Lord's solution as to the योगभ्रष्ट at the end of this chapter Arjuna asks what becomes of the man who has been a striver in the path of such Dhyana yoga and who does not attain the fulfilment in this life and dies before such fulfilment.

8 Sankarananda quotes also the beautiful verse

नैव धर्मी न चाधर्मी न चैव हि शुभाशुभी।
य स्यादेकासने लीनस्तूष्णीं किंचिदचिन्तयन्॥

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते।
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते॥ ४॥

Verily, when a man is not attached to the sense-objects or to actions and is habituated to

the renunciation of all egotistic volitions, he is then said to be a man of accomplished ascent in Yoga.

NOTES

1 Thus this requires the perfection of Nishkama Karma and renunciation of desire and the root of desire (Sankalpa)

2 Kama leads to Karma and Karma leads to Samsara स यथाकामो भवति तत्क्रतुर्भवति यत्क्रतुर्भवति तत्कर्म कुरुते (Sruti). यद्यद्धि कुरुते कर्म तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् (Manu Smriti).

सङ्कल्पमूलाः कामा वै यज्ञाः सङ्कल्पसम्भवाः ।
काम जानामि ते मूलं संकल्पात्किल जायसे ।
न त्वां संकल्पयिष्यामि समूलो विनशिष्यसि ॥

3 Sri Ramanujacharya says well कर्मयोग एव योगनिष्पत्तिकारणम् । अतो विषयाननुषङ्गाभ्यासरूप कर्मयोगमेवारुरुक्षुः कुर्यात् ।

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥

A man should uplift himself by his own self He should not degrade himself, for his self is his self's friend and his self is his self's enemy.

NOTES

1 The controversy as to whether the meaning is that the mind (Atma) should be used to uplift the self or that God (Atma) should be used for that purpose is fought out often, but is not of much use The mind is the instrument of uplift, God is the aid, the soul is the maker of the effort. As the Atma is self effulgent and as *avidya* is an immemorial veil which can be torn asunder, the Atman who is the putter on of the veil can put it asunder Thus from the point of view of the effort, the instrument (the mind) gains prominence, and from the point of view of the Jiva, God gains prominence

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥ ६ ॥

The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered his body and his senses through the self So far as the enmity of the unconquered mind and senses to the self is concerned, the self itself acts as the enemy of such self

NOTES

1 This cryptic passage expands the idea contained in the previous stanza The self obscured self is the hindrance to the glory of its effulgence,

the self-released self is the helper of the glory of its effulgence

2 Put briefly the verse means that the *jitendriya* (the man of conquered senses) attains self realisation while the *ajitendriya* (the man of unconquered senses) does not

3 A famous stanza says well

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।
बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥

4 Another famous stanza says

वाचं यच्छ मनो यच्छ यच्छ प्राणेन्द्रियाणि च ।
आत्मानमात्मना यच्छ न भूयः कल्पसेऽध्वने ॥

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ ७ ॥

To him who, amidst cold and heat and pleasure and pain and praise and blame, is self controlled and serene, the Supreme Self becomes a realisation

NOTES

1 परमात्मा समाहित is split up by Sri Desikar as आत्मा पर समाहित He and Sri Ramanujacharya take Atma here as Jivatma As already stated above by me, according to them Chapters 1 to VI take us

only to the realisation of Atma while Chapter VII and succeeding chapters take us to the realisation of God through Bhakti

2 Sri Sankarananda quotes here the following great Sruti passages

"महत्पद ज्ञात्वा वृक्षमूले वसत् कुचैलाऽसहाय एकाकी समाधिस्थ आत्मकाम आप्तकामा निष्कामा जीर्णकामो व्याघ्र हस्तिनि सिंहे दंश मशके नकुल सर्पे यक्षे राक्षसे गन्धर्वे मृत्यो रूपाणि विदित्वा न बिभेति कुतश्चन । वृक्ष इव तिष्ठासेच्छिद्यमानो न कुप्येत न कपेत उपल इव तिष्ठासेच्छिद्यमानो न कुप्येत न कपेत आकाशमिव तिष्ठासेच्छिद्यमानो न कुप्येत न कपेत सत्यन तिष्ठासत् ।"

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥ ८ ॥

He whose mind is filled with satisfaction by knowledge and realisation, who is unshakable, and who is of subdued senses is called the *yukta* (the man of accomplished *yoga*) Such a *yogin* is one to whom a lump of earth, a stone, and gold are the same

NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya says that कूटस्थ means अप्रकम्प्य (unshakeable) Sri Ramanujacharya says that कूट means the Jivatma and that yoga leads to the realisation of the Jiva (chit) and that the pure chit

realises *Bhagavan* through *Bhakti*. Sri Madhvacharya says that कूट means Akasa (ether) and that कूटस्थ means निर्विकार (unchanging) like the akasa (ether).

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥ ९ ॥

He who has a sameness of mind towards unselfish well-wishers, friends, enemies, neutrals, mediators, hateful men, kinsmen, righteous men, and unrighteous men excels all others.

NOTES:

1. Sri Madhvacharya says that all Jivas are *chit* and that the differences are due *to the mind*. He quotes the following verse

स्वतः सर्वेऽपि चिद्रूपाः सर्वदोषविवर्जिताः ।
जीवास्तेषां तु ये दोषास्त उपाधिकृता मताः ॥
सर्वे चेश्वरतस्तेषां न किंचित्स्वत एव तु ।
समा एषा ह्यतः सर्वे वैषम्यं भ्रान्तिसंभवम् ॥

2. We must remember that this description relates to the *yogarudha*. It does not mean that a man in his *Grihastha* life is to treat the righteous and the unrighteous alike. Indeed Lord Rama has been described as स्थानक्रोधः प्रहर्ता च (the man of well-placed anger and the awarder of punishment).

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥ १० ॥

The yogi should incessantly apply his mind to meditation, remaining in a secret place by himself, with mind and body controlled, devoid of desire, and free from possessions.

NOTES.

1. After describing the योगारूढ, (the man of accomplished yoga) the Lord proceeds to describe *yoga* and its *angas*.

2. This injunction is especially necessary in the modern age when man is too much with his fellows in work and in play. Social service is good. But it ought not to kill solitary meditation. Service and meditation are the two wings on which the soul rises to God

3. The *yogasutras* give us a full description of the eight angas. The unconcentrated mind is full of *klesas* (afflictions) and *vikshepas* (distractions).

4. Karma yoga is the step to ध्यानयोग. Patanjali's Yoga sutras (II, 1) says. तपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः ।

5. *Tapas* requires lonelines. A familiar saying tells us: एकस्तपो द्विरध्यायी ।

6 A beautiful stanza says

एकान्तवासो लघुभोजनाद् मौन निराशा करणावरोध ।
मुनेरसो सयमन षडेते चित्तप्रसाद जनयन्ति शीघ्रम् ॥

7 It is said also

एकोऽभिक्षुर्यथोक्त स्याद्वौ चैव मिथुन भवत् ।
त्रया ग्राम समाख्यात ऊर्ध्व तु नगरायते ॥

नगर हि न कर्तव्य ग्रामो वा मिथुन तथा ।
राजवार्ता हि तेषा स्याद्भिक्षावार्ता परस्परम् ॥

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रित नातिनीच चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ ११ ॥

तत्रैकाग्र मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२ ॥

Having established in a pure spot a firm seat of his own, neither too high nor too low, and made of a cloth, a black antelope skin and kusha grass one over the other, having seated himself on that seat, making his mind one-pointed, with the activities of his mind and senses controlled, let him practise *yoga* for the purification of the mind

NOTES

1 The need for a quiet and firm and easy seat

for purposes of meditation is thus stated by Bhagavan Patanjali स्थिरसुखमासन आसीन सम्भवात् ॥

2 The Sruti says

दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभि ।

सम कायशिरोग्रीव धारयन्नचल स्थिरः ।
सम्प्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्र स्व दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ १३ ॥

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।
मन. सयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्पर. ॥ १४ ॥

Holding the body and head and neck erect and still, steady, with his gaze fixed on the point of the nose, without seeing the various directions, with a tranquil heart, fearless, steadfastly rooted in the Brahmacharya vows—let him sit in Yoga, controlling his mind and with mind fixed on Me and having Me as his Supreme goal

NOTES

1 Seeing the point of the nose is to prevent one's having open eyes which distracts our attention and having closed eyes which induces sleep It is a means of calming the mind and meditating on God The purpose is thus tersely stated by Sri Madhusoodana लयविक्षेपराहित्याय ।

2 Two beautiful stanzas well bring out the allies and the enemies of *yoga*

उत्साहान्निश्चयाद्धैर्यात्तत्त्वज्ञानात्मदर्शनात् ।
जनसंगपरित्यागात्सद्भिर्योग प्रसिध्यति ॥

अत्याहारात्प्रवासाच्च प्रजल्पान्नियमाग्रहात् ।
जनसंगाच्च लौल्याच्च षड्भिर्योगा विनश्यति ॥

3 एकाग्रता (concentration) is essential Bhagavan Patanjali says that the five states of mind are क्षिप्त, मूढ, विक्षिप्त, एकाग्र, निरुद्ध ।

4 He is the Beloved of the soul and the object of Dhyana Yoga is to meditate on Him so as to attain *Samadhi Yoga* which is union with Him. The Sruti says तदेतत्प्रेय पुत्रात्प्रेयो वित्तात्प्रेयोऽन्यस्मात्सर्वस्मादन्तरतरं यदयमात्मा ।

युञ्जन्नेव सदात्मान योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ १५ ॥

Thus keeping the mind always steadfast the yogi of subdued mind attains the peace which culminates in Moksha (liberation) and which is in My gift

NOTES

1 Such a Yogi is one of attained peace and bliss and liberation and realisation

प्रज्ञाप्रासादमारुह्य अशोच्यः शोचतो जनान् ।
भूमिष्ठानिव शैलस्थः सर्वान्प्राज्ञोऽनुपश्यति ॥

2. It has been well said:

आगमनाऽनुमानेन ध्यानाभ्यासरसेन च ।
त्रिधा प्रकल्पयन्प्रज्ञां लभते योगमुत्तमम् ॥

3. Sri Madhvacharya interprets निर्वाणपरमां as शरीरत्यागोत्तरकालीनां (attained after the casting off of the body). His school does not admit जीवन्मुक्ति ।

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ १६ ॥

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

Yoga is not for him who eateth too much, nor for him who eats too little, nor for him who sleeps too much, nor for him who wakes too much, O Arjuna!

Yoga, which is the conqueror of misery, is for him who is temperate in eating and recreation, who is of regulated conduct in his actions, and who is of regulated sleep and wakefulness.

NOTES:

1. The proportions of food and drink are thus stated in a well known stanza:

अर्धमशनस्य सव्यञ्जनस्य तृतीयमुदकस्य तु ।
वायोः संचरणार्थं तु चतुर्थमवशेषयेत् ॥

2. The Satapatha Sruti says

यदु ह वा आत्मसम्मितमन्नं तदवति तन्न हिनस्ति यद्भूयो हिनस्ति तद्यत्कनीयो न भवति ॥

नाध्मातः क्षुधितः श्रान्तो न च व्याकुलचेतनः ।
युञ्जीत योगं राजेन्द्र योगी सिद्ध्यर्थमात्मनः ॥
नातिशीते न चैवोष्णे न द्वन्द्वेनानिलान्विते ।
कालेष्वेतेषु युञ्जीत न योगं ध्यानतत्परः ॥

(*Markandeya Purana*)

निद्राशनभयश्वासचेष्टातन्द्र्यादिवर्जनम् ।
कृत्वा निमीलिताक्षस्तु शक्तो ध्यायन्प्रसिद्ध्यति ॥

(*Naradiya*)

4. The value of early rising in the Brahma Muhurta (one hour and a half before sunrise) is thus stated.

रात्रेर्भागत्रयं कृत्वा प्रबुद्धः प्रथमान्तयोः ।
प्रस्वपन्मध्यमे भागे योगयोग्यः प्रजायते ॥

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८ ॥

When the well-controlled mind rests serenely in the Self alone, free from longing after all desires, then is he said to be a man of yoga.

NOTES.

1. Nilakantha says that this and the five succeeding verses describe the man of attained *Yoga*. They describe *asamprajnata samadhi*.

2 आत्मनि Sri Madhvacharya interprets this as meaning God

3 Vairagya is the अन्तरङ्गयोगसाधन It is of two kinds—अपर and पर The former is of 4 varieties — यतमान, व्यतिरेक, एकेन्द्रिय and वशीकार viz, attempt at discrimination of eternal things from non-eternal things, separation of eternal values, self-controlled state of mind and absence of desires पर वैराग्य is the negation of all desires सकलप्रपञ्चव्यवहारवैतृष्ण्यरूपम् ।

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥ १९ ॥

Just as a flame in a windless place flickereth not, even such is deemed the simile of the Yogi of controlled mind practising concentration in the self

NOTES

1 Sri Madhvacharya pursues here his own idea in his commentary on the previous verse He says that आत्मनो योग means भगवद्विषय योगम् ।

2 In connection with this stanza we may well refer to the beautiful stanza in Kalidasa's Kumarasambhava describing Siva's Yoga

अवृष्टिसंरम्भमिवाम्बुवाहमपामिवाधारमनुत्तरङ्गम् ।
अन्तश्चराणां मरुतां निरोधान्निवातनिष्कम्पमिव प्रदीपम् ॥

(Like the cloud unladen with the excitements of rain like the ocean of stilled waves and billows and like the steady flame in a windless place owing to the control of the moving breath)

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।
यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २० ॥

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।
वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१ ॥

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥२२॥

तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥२३॥

That in which the mind finds rest tranquilised by the practice of yoga, that in which he, realising the Supreme through the pure mind, rejoices in the self, that in which he realises the boundless bliss which the poised mind can grasp

and which is beyond the reach of the senses, and being established in which truth he does not swerve therefrom, having attained which he feels that there is no greater gain beyond it, being established in which he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow,—know *that* is described by the term yoga which is a disconnection from all union with pain. Such Yoga should be practised with persevering effect and with an undepressed mind.

NOTES

1 This *yogic bliss* is different from the joy of deep sleep because there we have *vidya* while here we have *avidya*. *Gaudapadacharya* says —

"लीयते तु सुषुप्ता तन्निगृहीत न लीयत

2 The yogic bliss has thus been well described

समाधिनिर्धूतमलयस्य चेतसो
निवेशितस्यात्मनि युत्सुख भवेत् ।
न शक्यते वर्णयितु मिरा तदा
स्वय तदन्त करणेन गृह्यते ॥

स्वस्थ शान्त स निर्वाणमकथ्य सुखमुत्तमम् ।

3 The last qualification laid down is a stout heart. Let us never quail before the great task and the great call. Gaudapadacharya describes this trait thus very well

उत्सेक उदधेर्यद्वत्कुशाग्रेणैकबिन्दुना ।
मनसो निग्रहस्तद्वद्भवेदपरिखेदत: ॥

4 Sri Madhvacharya pursues his interpretation already referred to thus in his *bhashya* on the 20th stanza आत्मना मनसा । आत्मनि देहे । आत्मानं भगवन्तं पश्यन् ।

5 Sri Madhvacharya interprets तस्मात् as meaning भगवद्रूपात् (from God)

6 दु:खसंयोगवियोग This means not only destruction of a pain born but also the prevention of the birth of pain

7 In the Maitrayana Sruti it is said

षड्भिर्मासैस्तु युक्तस्य नित्ययुक्तस्य देहिन: ।
आनन्द: परमा गुह्य: सम्यग्योग: प्रवर्तते ॥

8 In the Mahabharata it has been said well

न त्वसौ चक्षुषा ग्राह्यो न च सर्वैरपीन्द्रियै: ।
मनसैव प्रदीपेन महानात्मा प्रदृश्यते ॥
सर्वत: पाणिपादान्त: सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुख: ।
सर्वत: श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥
आत्मानमालोकयति मनसा प्रहसन्निव ।
तदेवमाश्रय कृत्वा मोक्षं याति ततो मयि ।
षण्मासान्नित्ययुक्तस्य योग: पार्थ: प्रवर्तते ॥

(Mahabharata, Asvamedha Anugeeta Chapter)

संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषत. ।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥ २४ ॥

शनैःशनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किंचिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

Abandoning in their entirety all desires born of egotistical volitions, and completely restraining by the mind the entire group of the senses from their objects in all directions, let him by slow degrees attain tranquillity, through his faculty of discrimination upheld by firm resolve and by making the mind abide in the Self. Let him not think of anything (else).

NOTES

1 Thus meditation involves the double process of tranquillisation which means the stilling of the waves of desire, and concentration, which means the realisation of the Atman. It is not the negation of thought but the calming of the sea of the mind to reflect and realise the Infinite Glory. To use the words of Maharshi Patanjali, it includes प्रशान्तवाहिता and आत्मख्या.

2 Sri Madhusoodana, explains in his luminous commentary this gradual process of tranquillisation

and concentration आत्मसंस्थ refers to सम्प्रज्ञातसमाधि and न किंचिदपि चिन्तयेत् refers to असम्प्रज्ञातसमाधि

3 The Sruti says

यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।
नानुध्यायेद्बहून् शब्दान्वाचो विग्लापनं हि तत् ॥

4 In a beautiful stanza this process of elimination, tranquillisation and concentration has been thus well described

आत्मनात्माकारं स्वभावोऽवस्थितं सदा चित्तम् ।
आत्मैकाकारतया तिरस्कृतानात्मदृष्टि विदधीत ॥

Again —

उपायेन निगृह्णीयाद्विक्षिप्तं कामभोगयोः ।
सुप्रसन्नं लये चैव यथाकामो लयस्तथा ॥

दुःखं सर्वमनुस्मृत्य कामभोगान्निवर्तयेत् ।
अजं सर्वमनुस्मृत्य जातं नैव तु पश्यति ॥

लये संबोधयेच्चित्तं विक्षिप्तं शमयेत्पुनः ।
सकषायं विजानीयात् समप्राप्तं न चालयेत् ॥

नास्वादयेत्सुखं तत्र निःसङ्गः प्रज्ञया भवेत् ।
निश्चलं निश्चरच्चित्तमेकीकुर्यात्प्रयत्नतः ॥

यदा न लीयते चित्तं न च विक्षिप्यते पुनः ।
अनिङ्गनमनाभासं निष्पन्नं ब्रह्म तत्तदा ॥

Again —

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्त ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति तामाहु परमां गतिम् ॥
तां योगमिति मन्य त स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ।
अप्रमत्तस्तदा भवति योगो हि प्रभवाप्ययौ ॥

5 Sri Madhwacharya says well

सुख कारणत्व मनोनिग्रह आत्मरमण च ।

6 Sri Ramanujacharya shows that desires are of two kinds (1) those born of sense contact (स्पर्शजा) like heat and cold (2) those born of *Sankalpa* like love of wealth etc The latter can be abandoned, the former should be neutralised

यतो यतो निश्चलति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ २६ ॥

As often as the wavering and unsteady mind strays away, so often curb it and bring it under the control of the Atman

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥ २७ ॥

Verily the supreme bliss comes to that yogi who is of perfectly tranquil mind, whose passion

has been quieted, who has become Brahma, and who is above all taint

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥ २८ ॥

The yogi, freed from all taint, constantly practising yoga, enjoys with ease the endless bliss of contact with Brahman

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ २९ ॥

With the mind tranquilled by yoga and realising God in all creation, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self

NOTES

1 This and the three succeeding verses clearly refer to certain planes of *realisation*—not to a mere philanthropic patronising *sense* of equality or a democratic *assertion* of equality or a philosophic *theory* of equality

2 Sri Sankaracharya says that they refer to ब्रह्मैकत्वदर्शनम् Sri Ramanujacharya says that they refer to the realisation of the Jivatma which is similar in each being despite variations of body and mind which is *Anu*, and which is Sachchidananda

Sri Madhvacharya says that they refer to the realisation of God upholding everything as different from and dependent upon Him To quote the very words of the Acharyas

> इदानीं योगस्य तत्फल ब्रह्मैकत्वदर्शनम् ।
> सर्वससारविच्छेदकारण तत्प्रदर्श्यते ॥
>
> (Sri Sankaracharya)

> एकस्मिन्नात्मनि दृष्ट सर्वस्यात्मवस्तुनस्तत्साम्यात् सममात्मवस्तु दृष्ट भवतीत्यर्थ ।
>
> (Sri Ramanujacharya).

> त च परमेश्वर ब्रह्मतृणादावैश्वर्यादिना साम्येन पश्यति ।
>
> (Sri Madhvacharya)

3 Sri Madhusoodana has started here a fruitless discussion that is likely to drag us away from the main path He says that the path of yoga and the path of jnana are different, that Moksha can be attained without yoga and that Sri Sankaracharya has not laid down yoga as a necessary pre requisite Neelakantha and Dhanapaty attack these views and point out that *Sadhana-chatushtaya* includes yoga and that yoga is a necessary pre requisite Sri Madhusoodana refers to *Yoga Vasishtha*

> द्वौ क्रमौ चित्तनाशाय योगो ज्ञान च राघव ।
> योगो वृत्तिनिरोधो हि ज्ञान सम्यगवेक्षणम् ॥

असाध्य कस्यचिद्योग कस्यचित्तत्त्वनिश्चय ।
प्रकारौ द्वौ ततो देवा जगाद परम शिव ॥

Nilakantha refers to Daksha —

स्वयवश हि तद्ब्रह्म कुमारी स्त्रीसुख यथा ।
अयोगा नैव जानन्ति जात्यन्धा इव यथा घटम् ॥

4 I do not wish to be drawn into this controversy, for like the controversy about Advaita Visishtadvaita and Dvaita, the controversy about Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, and other controversies, it will be endless and is futher more verbal than real I may, however, point out here the following facts

I How can a permanent sense of the अनृतत्व (unreality) of the world come except to the man of concentrated mind? The ordinary mind is dispersed among the sense objects Until it is re collected and concentrated, a man will repeat parrot like the declarations of the Advaita but will not realise them.

II As stated already Sadhanachatushtaya includes *jnja*. Sama, Dama etc, can never be had without yoga

III. The *Sruti* आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्य श्रोतव्या मन्तव्या निदिध्यासितव्य shows that Nididhyasana is a necessary stage between Manana and Darsana

IV If the meaning of Vasishta is that mere *yoga* apart from jnana is an independent means of Moksha, that would be a violent extension of the doctrine of the Sruti and the Gita The following Sruti passages should be borne in mind

तमेव विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ।

शान्तो दान्तो उपरतस्तितिक्षु समाहितो भूत्वा आत्मन्येवात्मानं पश्येत् ॥

श्रद्धावित्तो भूत्वा ॥

तत्कारणं सांख्ययोगाभिपन्नं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ॥

विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम् ॥

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि स्थिताः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥

V In Sri Sankaracharya's commentary on the Brahma Sutra "एतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः" he attacks only certain assertions of doctrine in the yoga philosophy and not the yogic methods and realisations

VI It is hence clear that yoga is a vital factor both in Bhakti and Jnana The Bhakti which merely luxuriates in emotion without the yogic self withdrawal and meditation and concentration is likely to make a fetish of emotion and forget the vital elements of devotion The Jnana

which merely luxuriates in the subtleties of meta physics without yogic self withdrawal and medita tion and concentration is likely to make a fetish of *Vada* (discussion) and forget the vital element of *jnana* The Gita—our perfect scripture—shows the ascent of the spiritual life clearly enough The constant practice of *punya karmas* such as sams karas, service, philanthropy etc is the discipline that fits us for karma yoga Some people like Mr Tilak will stand there and will not go beyond *Karma yoga* has in it elements of yoga and bhakti and jnana but the Nishkama Karma element is the predominant element It fits us for Raja yoga which fits us for Bhakti and jnana which lead to Moksha ज्ञानमुत्पद्यत पुंसा क्षयात्पापस्य कर्मण ।

5 I may quote here one of a series of won derfully beautiful stanzas in the Svetasvetara Upanishad

त्रिरुन्नत स्थाप्य सम शरीर हृदान्द्रियाणि मनसा सन्निवेश्य ।
ब्रह्मोडुपेन प्रतरेत विद्वान् स्रोतांसि सर्वाणि भयावहानि ॥

यो मा पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याह न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ ३० ॥

He who sees Me in all things and sees all things in Me,—I am never lost to him and he is never lost to me

NOTES .

1. In the former verse the realisation of the त्वंपदार्थ the soul is emphasised In this verse the realisation of the तत्पदार्थ (God) is emphasised

2. "Never *Lost*"—This refers to the fact that there is an absence of even momentary non-realisation of God. The Lord says later on in the Gita - ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् । प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ।

3. Sri Ramanujacharya says that मां means मत्साम्यं—According to him Chapter VI deals only with the realisation of Jiva which is similar to God

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ ३१ ॥

He who being established in unity, worships Me dwelling in all beings,—that yogi abides in me, whatever be his mode of life

NOTES

1 Sri Madhusoodana points out that here the realisation is that of the identity of the त्वंपदार्थ and the तत्पदार्थ in तत्त्वमसि ।

2. Sri Ramanujacharya has to explain this verse as relating to the realisation of God in worship as dwelling in all beings

3 The fact seems to me that the Lord is describing in these four verses certain planes of realisation attained by the yogi whose concentration intensified by Bhakti and Jnana has begun to bear fruit

4 सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि—Sri Venkatanatha quotes the verse निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां को विधि को निषेध —In this connection Yajnavalkya, Janaka, and Dattatreya are given as instances of the seer who has attained God-vision and is yet in this embodiment as the result of Prârabdha Karma (fructified past action) by way of बाधितानुवृत्ति। Yajnavalkya lived in a state of Karma Tyâga, (renunciation of action) and Janaka lived doing Vihita Karma (performance of action)

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥

He who has a sameness of vision for the bliss and grief of all through a realisation of likeness to his Self,—such yogi is regarded as the highest

NOTES

1 There is a lurking feeling in the minds of some commentators that one who regards the joy or grief of others as his own cannot be placed even so

high as one who has visioned God and they are puzzled by the declaration that such a yogi is the highest.

2. It seems to me that the Lord intended this verse to describe a culminating realisation. It describes the yogi who, attaining the realisations referred to above is, in his periods of व्युत्थान (coming out of yoga) full of over-flowing divine love for all, full of *ahimsa*, and confers bliss upon all. The realisation dealt with here is not the attempt to cultivate sympathy towards suffering which is an initial yogic step. But it is the spontaneous out-flow of Ananda, Prema and Ahimsa as the result of self-realisation and God-realisation through Yoga, Bhakti and Jnana सर्वभूतसुहृच्छान्तः।

3. Sri Ramanujacharya reverses this idea and says the verse refers to the Yogi who is as indifferent to his suffering as to the sorrow that comes to another man.

अर्जुन उवाच—

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन।
एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्थितिं स्थिराम्॥

Arjuna said:

This yoga which has been taught by thee,

O, slayer of Madhu, as being of the nature of evenness—I do not see its steady existence owing to the restlessness (of the mind.)

NOTES:

1. साम्य—implies balance, evenness, and equanimity as also the realisation of equality and identity.

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ ३४ ॥

Verily, the mind, O Krishna, is restless impetuous, strong and unyielding. I deem its control as difficult as the control of the wind.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—
असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ ३५ ॥

The blessed Lord said:

Without doubt, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to curb and restless; but it can be curbed by constant practice and by dispassion.

NOTES:

1. क्रमनिग्रह (gradual control) is better and easier than हठनिग्रह (violent control).

2. *Abhyāsa*—Sri Madhusoodana defines it thus:
मन्त्रजपदेवताध्यानादीनां क्रियारूपाणां आवृत्तिलक्षणोऽभ्यासः ।
(It is the repetition of mantra, japa, dhyana etc).

3 Chapter I Sutras 12 to 15 in Yoga Sutras says:

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः ।
तत्र स्थितौ यत्नोऽभ्यासः ।
स तु दीर्घकालनैरन्तर्यसत्कारासेवितो दृढभूमिः ।
दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवितृष्णस्य वशीकारसंज्ञा वैराग्यम् ।

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।
वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ ३६ ॥

My conviction is that yoga is hard to attain by one of uncontrolled mind, but by one whose mind is controlled and who makes incessant endeavours it can be attained by such means.

अर्जुन उवाच—
अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।
अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥३७॥

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥ ३८ ॥

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।
त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥ ३९ ॥

Having attained the realms of the doers of righteous actions and having lived there for immemorial years, he who fell from Yoga is reborn in a pure and prosperous home

Or else he is born into a family of wise yogins, Verily such a birth is very rare to obtain in this world

NOTES

1 Thus in the case of those who die before going through all the seven yogic *Bhumis* to which I have already referred there are powerful aids to the achievement of perfections in a later birth The latter state is even higher and rarer than the former

शिलाञ्छवृत्त्या परितुष्टचित्तो धर्मं महान्तं विरजं जुषाण ।
मस्यर्पितात्मा गृह एव तिष्ठन् नातिप्रसक्त समुपैति शान्तिम् ॥

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूय संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ ४३ ॥

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि स. ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४ ॥

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ ४५ ॥

There he recovers union with the faculty of discrimination acquired in his former body, and strives more than before for perfection, O son of the Kurus

By his former practice alone, he is irresistibly impelled Even the yogic enquirer transcends the world of works

The yogi striving assiduously, cleansed of all taint, gradually gaining perfection through many births, attains the highest goal.

NOTES

1 It was the force of previous yoga that swept Prahlada on its current over paternal obstruction to reach the lotus feet of God

2 Sri Madhusoodana says well अकस्मादव भोग वासनाभ्यो व्युत्थाप्य मोक्षसाधनान्मुख क्रियते ।

3 शब्दब्रह्म is interpreted by Sri Ramanujacharya as meaning Prakriti The stanza is interpreted by him as meaning that the *yogi* attains the realisation of the Jiva which transcends Prakriti प्रकृतिबन्धाद्विमुक्तो देवमनुष्यादिशब्दाभिलापानर्हं विज्ञानानन्दैकतान मात्म आत्मानं प्राप्नोतीत्यर्थः ।

4 The author of *Gita Vivriti* explains Sabda Brahma as meanig the totality of rules of *Vidhi*

and *Aushedha* Thus according to the Dvaita school the stanza means that the man of realised yoga goes beyond the plane of obligatory action

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ ४६ ॥

The Yogi is superior to the ascetics, it is superior to the men of shastraic study, he is superior to the perfomers of Vedic acts, therfore be thou a Yogi, O Arjuna!

NOTES

1 This verse has caused a flutter in some quarters as a yogi has been exalted here over all others But the verse marks the culmination of one portion of a synthetic doctrine The mind disciplined by ज्ञानकर्म becomes fit for Karma Yoga In Chapters II to V Karma Yoga was belauded and Arjuna was ordered in Chapter III, 5—19 to perform it as it will lead to the Supreme In Chapter VI we are led to the yoga of meditation which is the fruit of Karma Yoga

which are the fruitage of yoga and he is going to be enjoined to practise them. Each higher injunction presupposes a previous lower attainment followed by probation for the higer realisation. It presupposes also that the next lower injunction will not be given up but will be kept up for Lokasangraha.

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥४७॥

Among all the yogis, he who, with his mind merged in Me and full of faith worships Me, is considered by Me as the highest.

NOTES:

1. Here the Lord has hinted the inner shrine into which the second gate—the gate of Yoga—opens.

2. मां— This word is the occasion for a magnificent prose lyric descriptive of Bhagavan in Sri Ramanujacharya's Bhashya on this verse.

3. This verse is the सूत्रस्थानीय for the elaborate description of तत्त्वार्थं in the next group of six cantoes (षट्कं).

(CONCLUSION.)

1. This Chapter is mainly devoted to the exposition of the yoga of meditation (Rāja Yōga).

Sri Madhusoodana thus beautifully sums up the teachings of this Chapter

तदनेनाध्यायेन कर्मयोगस्य बुद्धिशुद्धिहेतोर्मर्यादां दर्शयता, ततश्च कृतसर्वकर्मसंन्यासस्य साङ्गं योगं विवृण्वता मनोनिग्रहोपायं चाक्षेपनिरासपूर्वमुपदिशता, योगभ्रष्टस्य पुरुषार्थशून्यताशङ्कां च शिथिलयता, कर्मकाण्डं त्वंपदार्थनिरूपणं च समापितम्। अतः परं श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मामिति सूचितं भक्तियोगं भजनीयं च भगवन्तं वासुदेवं तत्पदार्थं निरूपयितुमग्रिममध्यायषट्कमारभ्यते इति शिवम्।

2 The Gitartha Sangraha thus sums up this Chapter

योगाभ्यासविधिर्योगी चतुर्धा योगसाधनम्।
योगसिद्धिः स्वयोगस्य पारम्यं षष्ठ उच्यते॥

3 According to Sri Ramanujacharya this Chapter teaches us the method of yoga which leads us to the realisation of the Atman (Jiva) Such a man of realisation will, then, through Bhakti, reach Narayana

4 We can well see how this Chapter gives us the truth that the yoga of meditation is the fulfilment of Karma Yoga and is the *Sâdhana* (means) of *Bhakti* and *Jnana*

Thus ends the Chapter
ATMASAMYAMA YOGA.